AN

ESSAY

ON

PRINTS.

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By WILLIAM GILPIN, M.A.

PREBENDARY OF SALISBURY;

AND VICAR OF BOLDRE IN NEW-FOREST,

NEAR LYMINGTON.

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ARTS
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TO THE HONORABLE

HORACE WALPOLE,

IN DEFERENCE TO HIS TASTE
IN THE POLITE ARTS;
AND THE
VALUABLE RESEARCHES HE HAS MADE
TO IMPROVE THEM;

THE FOLLOWING WORK
IS INSCRIBED

BY HIS MOST OBEDIENT
AND VERY HUMBLE SERVANT,

WILLIAM GILPIN.

Hoffmann 1929
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PREFACE.

THE chief intention of the following work, was to put the elegant amuſement of collecting prints on a more rational footing; by giving the *unexperienced* collector a few principles, and cautions to aſſiſt him.

With this view the author thought it neceſſary to apply the principles of painting to prints: and as his obſervations are not always new, he hath at leaſt made them conciſe.

His account of artiſts might eaſily have been enlarged, by having recourſe to books: particularly he could have availed himſelf much of the ingenious reſearches of Mr. Walpole. He did not however chooſe to ſwell his volume with what others had ſaid; but wiſhed rather to reſt on ſuch obſervations, as he had himſelf made. He had many opportunities of ſeeing ſome of the beſt collections of prints in England; and occaſionally availed himſelf of them by minuting down remarks.

Of the works of living artiſts the author hath purpoſely ſaid little. He

He thought himſelf not at liberty to find fault; and when he mentions a modern print, he means not, by praiſing one, to imply inferiority in another; but merely to illuſtrate his ſubject, when he had occaſion, with ſuch prints, as occurred to his memory.

The author wiſhes to add, that when he ſpeaks *poſitively* in any part of the following work, he means not to ſpeak *arbitrarily*: but only to avoid the tedious repetition of qualifying phraſes.

N. B. When the figures on the *right hand* are ſpoken of, thoſe are meant, which are oppoſite to the ſpectator's right hand: and ſo of the left.

EXPLANATION

OF

TERMS.

Composition, in its *large* ſenſe means, a picture in general: in its *limited* one, the art of grouping figures, and combining the parts of a picture. In this latter ſenſe it is ſynonymous with *diſpoſition*.

Deſign, in its ſtrict ſenſe, applied chiefly to *drawing*: in its more inlarged one, defined page 2. In its moſt inlarged one, ſometimes taken for a picture in general.

A whole: The idea of *one* object, which a picture ſhould give in its comprehenſive view.

Expreſſion: its ſtrict meaning defined page 16: but it often means the force, by which objects of *any* kind are repreſented.

Effect ariſes chiefly from the management of light; but the word is ſometimes applied to the general view of a picture.

Spirit, in its ſtrict ſenſe, defined page 21: but it is ſometimes taken in a more inlarged one, and means the *general* effect of a maſterly performance.

Manner, ſynonymous with *execution*.

Picturesque: a term expreſſive of that peculiar kind of beauty, which is agreeable in a picture.

Picturesque grace: an agreeable form which may be given even to a clowniſh figure.

Repoſe, or *quietneſs* applied to a picture, when the *whole* is harmonious; when nothing glares either in the light, ſhade, or colouring.

To *keep down*, *take down*, or *bring down*, ſignify throwing a degree of ſhade upon a glaring light.

A middle tint, is a medium between a ſtrong light, and ſtrong ſhade: the phraſe is not at all expreſſive of colour.

Catching

Catching lights are ſtrong lights, which ſtrike on ſome particular parts of an object, the reſt of which is in ſhadow.

Studies are the ſketched ideas of a painter, not wrought into a whole.

Freedom is the reſult of quick execution.

Extremities are the hands and feet.

Air, expreſſes chiefly the graceful action of the head; but often means a graceful attitude.

Contraſt, is the oppoſition of one part to another.

Needle is the inſtrument uſed in etching.

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CHAP. I.

The principles of Painting conſidered, ſo far as they relate to Prints.

A PAINTING, or picture, is diſtinguiſhed from a print only by colouring, and the manner of execution. In other reſpects, the foundation of beauty is the ſame in both; and we conſider a print, as we do a picture, in a double light, with regard to the *whole*, and with regard to its *parts*. It may have an agreeable effect as a *whole*, and yet be very culpable in its *parts*. It may be likewiſe the reverſe. A man may make a good appearance on the *whole;* though his *limbs*, examined ſeparately, may be wanting in exact proportion. His *limbs* on the other hand, may be exactly formed, and yet his perſon, on the *whole*, may be awkward, and diſpleaſing.

To make a print agreeable as a *whole*, a juſt obſervance of thoſe rules is neceſſary,

which relate to *deſign*, *diſpoſition*, *keeping*, and the *diſtribution of light:* to make it agreeable in its *parts*—of thoſe which relate to *drawing*, *expreſſion*, *grace*, and *perſpective*.

We conſider the *whole* before its *parts*, as it naturally precedes in practice. The painter firſt forms his general ideas; and diſpoſes them, yet crude, in ſuch a manner, as to receive the moſt beautiful form, and the moſt beautiful effect of light. His laſt work is to finiſh the ſeveral parts: as the ſtatuary ſhapes his block, before he attempts to give delicacy to the limbs.

By *deſign*, (a term which painters ſometimes uſe in a more limited ſenſe) we mean the general conduct of the piece, as a repreſentation of ſuch a particular ſtory. It anſwers, in the hiſtorical relation of a fact, to a judicious choice of circumſtances; and includes a *proper time*, *proper characters*, the *moſt affecting manner of introducing thoſe characters*, and *proper appendages*.

With regard to a *proper time*, the painter is aſſiſted by good old dramatic rules; which inform him, that *one* point of time only ſhould be taken—the moſt affecting in the action; and that no other part of the ſtory ſhould interfere

interfere with it. Thus *in the death of* ANANIAS, if the inſtant of his falling down be choſen, no anachroniſm ſhould be introduced; every part of the piece ſhould correſpond; each character ſhould be under the ſtrongeſt impreſſion of aſtoniſhment, and horror: thoſe paſſions being yet unallayed by any cooler paſſions ſucceeding.

With regard to *characters*, the painter muſt ſuit them to his piece, by attending to hiſtorical truth, if his ſubject be hiſtory; or to heathen mythology, if it be fabulous.

He muſt alſo *introduce them properly*. They ſhould be ordered in ſo advantageous a manner, that the principal figures, thoſe which are moſt concerned in the action, ſhould catch the eye *firſt*, and engage it *moſt*. This is very eſſential in a well-told ſtory. In the firſt place, they ſhould be the leaſt embarraſſed of the group. This alone gives them diſtinction. But they may be farther diſtinguiſhed, ſometimes by a *broad light*; ſometimes by a *ſtrong ſhadow*, in the midſt of a light; ſometimes by a remarkable *action*, or *expreſſion*; and ſometimes by a combination of two or three of theſe modes of diſtinction.

The laſt thing included in *deſign* is the uſe of *proper appendages*. By *appendages* are meant animals, landſcape, buildings, and in general, whatever is introduced into the piece by way of ornament. Every thing of this kind ſhould correſpond with the ſubject, and rank in a proper ſubordination to it. BASSAN would ſometimes paint a ſcripture-ſtory: and his method was, to croud his foreground with cattle; while you ſeek for his ſtory, and at length with difficulty find it in ſome remote corner of his picture. Indeed neither the *landſcape*, nor the *ſtory* is principal; but his cattle A *ſtory* therefore is an abſurd appendage.

When all theſe rules are obſerved, when a proper point of time is choſen; when characters correſponding with the ſubject are introduced, and theſe ordered ſo judiciouſly as to point out the ſtory in the ſtrongeſt manner; and laſtly when all the appendages, and under-parts of the piece are ſuitable, and ſubſervient to the ſubject; then the ſtory is well told, and of courſe the *deſign* is perfect.

The

The ſecond thing to be conſidered with regard to a *whole*, is *diſpoſition*. By this word is meant the art of grouping figures, and of combining the ſeveral parts of a picture. *Deſign* conſiders the ſeveral parts as producing a *whole*;—but a *whole*, ariſing from the *unity of the ſubject*, not the *effect of the object*. For the figures in a piece may be ſo ordered, as to tell a ſtory in an affecting manner, which is as far as *deſign* goes; and yet may want that agreeable *combination*, which is neceſſary to pleaſe the eye. To produce ſuch a combination is the buſineſs of *diſpoſition*. In the cartoon of St. PAUL *preaching at Athens*, the *deſign* is perfect; and the characters in particular, are ſo ordered, as to tell the ſtory in a very affecting manner: yet the ſeveral parts of the picture are far from being agreeably combined. If RUBENS had had the *diſpoſition* of the materials of this picture, its effect as a *whole* had been very different.

Having thus diſtinguiſhed between *deſign* and *diſpoſition*, I ſhall explain the latter a little farther.

It is an obvious principle, that one object at a time is enough to engage either the ſenſes, or the intellect. Hence the neceſſity of *unity*, or a *whole*, in painting. The eye, on a complex view, muſt be able to comprehend the picture as *one object*, or it cannot be ſatisfied. It may be pleaſed indeed by feeding on the parts ſeparately: but a picture, which can pleaſe no otherwiſe, is as poor a production as a machine, whoſe ſprings and wheels are finiſhed with nicety, but are unable to act in concert, and effect the intended movement.

Now *diſpoſition*, or the art of grouping and combining the figures, and ſeveral parts of a picture, contributes greatly to make the picture appear as *one object*. When the parts are ſcattered, they have no dependence on each other; they are ſtill only parts: but when, by an agreeable grouping, they are maſſed together, they become a *whole*.

In diſpoſing figures, great artifice is neceſſary to make each group open itſelf in ſuch a manner, as to ſet off advantageouſly the ſeveral figures,

figures, of which it is compoſed. The *action* at leaſt of each figure ſhould appear.

No group can be agreeable without *contraſt*. By *contraſt* is meant the oppoſition of one part to another. A ſameneſs in attitude, action, or expreſſion, among figures in the ſame group, will always diſguſt the eye. In the cartoon of St. PAUL *preaching at Athens*, the contraſt among the figures is pleaſing; and the want of it, *in the death of* ANANIAS, makes the group of the apoſtles rather diſagreeable.

Nor indeed is *contraſt* required only among the *figures* of the *ſame* group, but alſo among the *groups themſelves*, and among *all the parts*, of which the piece is compoſed. In the *beautiful gate of the temple*, the figures of the principal group are well contraſted; but the adjoining group is diſpoſed almoſt in the ſame manner; which, together with the formal pillars, introduce a diſagreeable regularity into the picture.

The judicious painter, however, whether he group, combine, or contraſt, will always avoid the *appearance of artifice*. The ſeveral

parts of his picture will be ſo ſuited to each other, that his art will ſeem the reſult of chance. In the *ſacrifice at Lyſtra*, the head of the ox is bowed down, with a deſign, no doubt, to group the figures around it more harmoniouſly: but their action is ſo well ſuited to the poſture of the ox, and the whole is managed with ſo much judgment, that, although the figures are diſpoſed with the utmoſt art, they appear with all the eaſe of nature. The remaining part of the group is an inſtance of the reverſe; in which a number of heads appear manifeſtly ſtuck in to fill up vacuities.

But farther, as a *whole*, or *unity*, is an eſſential of beauty, *that diſpoſition* is certainly the moſt perfect, which admits but of *one* group. All ſubjects, however, will not allow this *cloſe* obſervance of unity. When this is the caſe, the ſeveral groups muſt again be combined; chiefly by a proper diſtribution of light, ſo as to conſtitute a *whole*.

But as the *whole* will ſoon be loſt, if the conſtituent *parts* become *numerous*, it follows, that *many* groups muſt not be admitted.

Judicious

Judicious painters have thought *three* the utmoſt number, that can be allowed. Some ſubjects indeed, as battles and triumphs, neceſſarily require a great number of figures, and of courſe various combinations of groups. In the management of *ſuch* ſubjects, the greateſt art is neceſſary to preſerve a *whole*. Confuſion in the figures muſt be expreſſed without confuſion in the picture. A writer ſhould treat his ſubject *clearly*, though he write upon *obſcurity*.

With regard to *diſpoſition*, I ſhall only add, that the *ſhape* or *form* of the group ſhould alſo be conſidered. The *triangular* form MICHAEL ANGELO thought the moſt beautiful. And indeed there is a lightneſs in it, which no other form can receive. The group of the apoſtles, in the cartoon of *giving the keys*, and the ſame group, in the *death of* ANANIAS, are both heavy; and this heavineſs ariſes from nothing more than from the form of a parallelogram, within the lines of which theſe groups are contained. The triangular form too is capable of the moſt variety: for the vertical angle of a group ſo diſpoſed may either be acute, or obtuſe, in any degree. Or a *ſegment* only of a tri-

a triangle may be taken, which ſtill increaſes the variety.

I know well, that many of theſe remarks (on the cartoons eſpecially) oppoſe the opinions of very great maſters. The ſublimity of the Roman ſchool, they ſay, totally diſregarded the mechanical conſtruction of a group. And without doubt, ſimplicity, and a ſameneſs of figure, are ingredients of the ſublime. But perhaps this theory, like other theories, may be carried too far. I cannot conceive, that the group of the apoſtles in the cartoon of ANANIAS, for inſtance, would be leſs ſublime in the form of a triangle, than in that of a parallelogram. The triangle is certainly the more ſimple figure, as it conſiſts of three ſides only, while the parallelogram occupies four. Beſides, Raphael himſelf by no means adopted the ſquare form as a *ruling principle.*——But I ſpeak with diffidence on this ſubject; nor indeed is this a place to diſcuſs it.

A third thing to be conſidered in a picture, with regard to a *whole*, is *keeping*. This word implies the different degrees of ſtrength and faintneſs,

faintneſs, which objects receive from nearneſs, and diſtance. A nice obſervance of the gradual fading of light and ſhade contributes greatly towards the production of a *whole*. Without it, the diſtant parts, inſtead of being connected with the objects at hand, appear like foreign objects, without meaning. Diminiſhed in *ſize* only, they unite Lilliput and Brobdignag in one ſcene. *Keeping* is generally found in great perfection in DELLA BELLA'S prints: and the want of it, as conſpicuouſly in TEMPESTA'S.

Nearly allied to *keeping* is the doctrine of *harmony*, which equally contributes towards the production of a *whole*. In *painting*, it has great force. A judicious arrangement of according tints will ſtrike even the unpractiſed eye. The *effect* of every picture, in a great meaſure, depends on one principal and maſter-tint; which, like the key-tone in muſic, prevails over the whole piece. Of this ruling tint, whatever it is, every object in the picture ſhould in a degree participate. This theory is founded on principles of truth; and produces a fine effect from the *harmony*, in

in which it unites every object. Harmony is oppoſed to glaring and gaudy colouring. Yet the ſkilful painter fears not, when his ſubject allows it, to employ the greateſt variety of rich tints; and though he may depreciate their value in ſhadow, he will not ſcruple in his lights, to give each its utmoſt glow. His art lies deeper. He takes the glare from one vivid tint by introducing another; and from a nice aſſemblage of the brighteſt colours, each of which alone would ſtare, he creates a glow in the higheſt degree harmonious. But theſe great effects are only to be produced by the magic of colours. The harmony of a print is a more ſimple production: and yet unleſs a print poſſeſs the ſame *tone of ſhadow*, if I may ſo expreſs myſelf, there will always appear great harſhneſs in it. We often meet with hard touches in a print; which, ſtanding alone, are unharmonious: but if every contiguous part ſhould be touched-up to that *tone*, the effect would be harmony.—*Keeping* then proportions a proper degree of ſtrength to the near and diſtant parts, in reſpect to *each other*. *Harmony* goes a ſtep farther, and keeps each part quiet, with reſpect to the *whole*. I ſhall only add, that in ſketches,

and

and rough etchings, no *harmony* is expected: it is enough, if *keeping* be obſerved. *Harmony* is looked for only in finiſhed prints. If you would ſee the want of it in the ſtrongeſt light, examine a worn-print, harſhly touched by ſome bungler.

The laſt thing, which contributes to produce a *whole*, is a proper *diſtribution of light*. This, in a print eſpecially, is moſt eſſential. Harmony in colouring may, in ſome meaſure, ſupply its place in painting: but a print has no ſuccedaneum. Were the *deſign*, *diſpoſition*, and *keeping* ever ſo perfect, beautiful, and juſt; without this eſſential, inſtead of a whole, we ſhould have only a piece of patch-work. Nay, ſuch is the power of *light*, that by an artificial management of it we may even harmonize a bad diſpoſition.

The general rule which regards the diſtribution of *light*, is, that it ſhould be ſpread in *large maſſes*. This gives the idea of a *whole*. Every grand object catches the light only on one large ſurface. Where the light is ſpotted, we have the idea of ſeveral objects; or at leaſt of an incoherent one, if the

the object be ſingle; which the eye ſurveys with difficulty. It is thus in painting. When we ſee, on a *comprehenſive* view, *large maſſes* of light and ſhade, we have, of courſe, the idea of a *whole*—of *unity* in that picture. But where the light is ſcattered, we have the idea of ſeveral objects; or at leaſt of one broken and confuſed. TITIAN's known illuſtration of this point by a bunch of grapes is beautiful, and explanatory. When the light falls upon the *whole bunch* together (one ſide being illumined, and the other dark) we have the repreſentation of thoſe large maſſes, which conſtitute a *whole*. But when the grapes are ſtripped from the bunch, and ſcattered upon a table (the light ſhining upon each ſeparately) a *whole* is no longer preſerved.

Having thus conſidered thoſe eſſentials of a print, which produce a *whole*, it remains to conſider thoſe, which relate to the *parts* —*drawing*, *expreſſion*, *grace*, and *perſpective*. With regard to theſe, let it be firſt obſerved, that in order, they are inferior to the other. The production of a *whole* is the great effect, that ſhould be aimed at in a picture. A picture

picture without a *whole* is properly only a ſtudy: and thoſe things, which produce a *whole*, are of courſe the *principal* foundation of beauty. So thought a great maſter of compoſition. With him no man was entitled to the name of artiſt, who could not produce a *whole*. However exquiſitely he might finiſh, he would ſtill be defective.

Infelix operis ſummâ, quia ponere totum
Neſciet.———————————

By *drawing* we mean the exactneſs of the out-line. Without a competent knowledge of this there can be no juſt repreſentation of nature. Every thing will be diſtorted and offenſive to the eye. *Bad* drawing therefore is that diſguſting object which no practiſed eye can bear.

Drawing, however, may be very tolerable, though it fall ſhort, in a *certain degree*, of abſolute perfection. The defect will only be obſerved by the moſt critical, and anatomical eye: and we may venture to ſay, that drawing is ranked too high, when the *niceties* of it are conſidered

in preference to thoſe eſſentials, which conſtitute a *whole*.

Expreſſion is the life and ſoul of painting. It implies a juſt repreſentation of *paſſion*, and of *character:* of *paſſion*, by exhibiting every emotion of the mind, as outwardly diſcovered by any peculiarity of geſture; or the extenſion, and contraction of the features: of *character*, by repreſenting the different manners of men, as ariſing from their particular tempers, or profeſſions. The cartoons are full of examples of the firſt kind of *expreſſion;* and with regard to the ſecond, commonly called *manners-painting*, it would be invidious not to mention our countryman HOGARTH; whoſe works contain a variety of characters, *repreſented* with more force, than moſt men can *conceive* them.

Grace conſiſts in ſuch a diſpoſition of the parts of a figure, as forms it into an agreeable attitude. It depends on *contraſt* and *caſe*. *Contraſt*, when applied to a ſingle figure, means the ſame, as when applied to a group; the oppoſition

oppoſition of one part to another. It may be conſidered with reference to the *body*, the *limbs*, and the *head*; the graceful attitude ariſing ſometimes from a contraſt in one, ſometimes in another, and ſometimes in all. With reference to the *body*, contraſt conſiſts in giving it an eaſy turn, oppoſing concave parts to convex. Of this St. PAUL in *the ſacrifice at Lyſtra* is an inſtance.——With reference to the *limbs*, it conſiſts in the oppoſition between extention and contraction. MICHAEL ANGELO's illuſtration by a triangle, or pyramid, may here likewiſe again be introduced; this form giving grace and beauty to a *ſingle figure*, as well as to a *group*. Only here a greater liberty may be allowed. In *grouping*, the triangle ſhould, I think, always reſt upon its baſe; but in a ſingle figure, it may be inverted, and ſtand upon its apex. Thus if the lower parts of the figure be extended, the upper parts ſhould be contracted; but the ſame beautiful form is given by extending the arms, and drawing the feet to a point.—Laſtly, contraſt often ariſes from the air of the head; which is given by a turn of the neck from the line of the body. The cartoons abound with ex-

amples of this ſpecies of *grace*. It is very remarkable in the figure of St JOHN healing the cripple: and the ſame cartoon affords eight or nine more inſtances. I ſay the leſs on this ſubject, as it hath been ſo well explained by the ingenious author of the *Analyſis of Beauty*.

Thus *contraſt* is the foundation of *grace*; but it muſt ever be remembered, that *contraſt* ſhould be accompanied with *eaſe*. The body ſhould be *turned* not *twiſted*; every *conſtrained* poſture avoided; and every motion ſuch, as nature which loves eaſe, would dictate.

What hath been ſaid on this head relates equally to *all* figures; thoſe drawn from *low*, as well as thoſe from *high* life. And here we may diſtinguiſh between *picturesque* grace, and that grace which ariſes from *dignity of character*. Of the *former* kind, which is the kind here treated of, *all* figures ſhould partake: you find it in BERGHEM's clowns, and in CALLOT's beggars: but it belongs to *expreſſion* to mark thoſe characteriſtics, which diſtinguiſh the *latter*.

I ſhall

I ſhall only obſerve farther, that when the piece conſiſts of many figures, the contraſt of *each ſingle* figure ſhould be ſubordinate to the contraſt of the *whole*. It will be improper therefore, in many caſes, to practiſe the rules, which have been juſt laid down. They ought, however, to be a general direction to the painter; and at leaſt to be obſerved in the *principal* figures.

Perſpective is that proportion, with regard to *ſize*, which near and diſtant objects, with their parts, bear to each other. It is an attendant on *keeping:* one gives the out-line; and the other fills it up. Without a competent knowledge of *perſpective* very abſurd things would be introduced: and yet to make a vain ſhew of it, is pedantic.——Under this head may be mentioned *fore-ſhortening*. But unleſs this be done with the utmoſt art, it were better omitted: it will otherwiſe occaſion great awkwardneſs. RUBENS is famous for *fore-ſhortening;* but the effect is chiefly ſeen in his *paintings;* ſeldom in his *prints*.

To this ſummary of the rules, which relate to the *whole* of the picture, and to its *parts*, I ſhall juſt add a few obſervations on *execution*; which relates equally to both.

By *execution* is meant that manner of working, by which each artiſt produces his effect. Artiſts may differ in their *execution* or *manner*, and yet all excel. CALLOT, for inſtance, uſes a ſtrong, firm ſtroke; SALVATOR, a ſlight, and looſe one; while REMBRANDT executes in a manner different from both, by ſcratches ſeemingly at random.

Every artiſt is in ſome degree a *manneriſt*: that is, he executes in a *manner* peculiar to himſelf. But the word *manneriſt* has generally a cloſer ſenſe. Nature ſhould be the ſtandard of imitation: and every object ſhould be executed, as nearly as poſſible, in *her manner*. Thus WARTERLO's trees are all ſtrongly impreſſed with the character of nature. Other maſters again, deviating from this ſtandard, execute in ſome manner of their own. They have a particular touch for a figure, or a tree:

tree: and this they apply on all occaſions. Inſtead therefore of repreſenting that endleſs variety which nature exhibits on every ſubject, a ſameneſs runs through all their performances. Every figure, and every tree bears the ſame ſtamp. Such artiſts are *properly* called *manneriſts*. TEMPEST, CALLOT, and TESTA are all *manneriſts* of this kind.

By the *ſpirit* and *freedom* of *execution*, we mean ſomething, which is difficult to explain. A certain heavineſs always follows, when the artiſt is not ſure of his ſtroke, and cannot execute his idea with preciſion. The reverſe is the caſe, when he is certain of it, and gives it boldly. I know not how to explain better what is meant by *ſpirit*. Mere *freedom* a quick execution will give; but unleſs that *freedom* be attended with preciſion, the ſtroke, however free, will be ſo unmeaning as to loſe its effect.

To theſe obſervations, it may not be improper to add a ſhort comparative view of the *peculiar* excellences of pictures, and prints; which will ſhew us, in what points the picture has the advantage.

In *deſign* and *compoſition* the effect of each is equal. The print exhibits them with as much force and meaning, as the picture.

In *keeping* the picture has the advantage. The *hazineſs* of diſtance cannot well be expreſſed by any thing but the *hue of nature*, which the pencil is very able to give. The print *endeavours* to preſerve this hazineſs; and to give the idea: but does it imperfectly. It does little more than aid the memory. We know the appearance exiſts in nature: and the print furniſhes a hint to recollect it.

In the *diſtribution of light* the compariſon runs very wide. Here the painter avails himſelf of a thouſand varied tints, which aſſiſt him in this buſineſs; and by which he can harmonize his gradations from light to ſhade with an almoſt infinite variety. Harmonious colouring has in itſelf the effect of a proper diſtribution of light. The engraver, in the mean time, is left to work out his effect with two materials only, plain white

and

and black —In the print, however, you can more eaſily trace the *principles* of light and ſhade. The pencil is the implement of deception; and it requires the eye of a maſter to diſtinguiſh between the effect of light, and the effect of colour: but in the print, even the unpractiſed eye can readily catch the maſs; and follow the diſtribution of it through all its variety of middle tints.—One thing more may be added: If the picture has no harmony in its colouring, the tints being all at diſcord among themſelves, which is often the caſe in the works even of reputable painters, a good print, from ſuch a picture, is more beautiful than the picture itſelf. It preſerves what is valuable (upon a ſuppoſition there is any thing valuable in it), and removes what is offenſive.

Thus the compariſon runs with regard to thoſe eſſentials, which relate to a *whole:* with regard to *drawing*, *expreſſion*, *grace*, and *perſpective*, we can purſue it only in the two former: in the latter, the picture and print have equal advantages.—With regard to *perſpective* indeed, the lines of the print verging

more conſpicuouſly to one point, mark the *principles* of it more ſtrongly.

Drawing, in a *picture*, is effected by the contiguity of two different colours: in a *print* by a poſitive line. In the *picture*, therefore, *drawing*, has more of nature in it, and more of effect: but the ſtudent in anatomy finds more preciſion in the print; and can more eaſily trace the line, and follow it in all its windings through light and ſhade.—In mezzotinto the compariſon fails; in which, drawing is effected nearly as it is in painting.

With regard to *expreſſion*, the painter glories in his many advantages. The paſſions receive their force almoſt as much from *colour*, as from the emotion of feature. Nay lines, without colour, have frequently an effect very oppoſite to what is intended. Violent expreſſions, when lineal only, are often groteſque. The complexion ſhould ſupport the diſtortion. The bloated eyes of immoderate grief degenerate into courſe features, unleſs the pencil add thoſe high-blown touches, which mark the

the paſſion. Aſk the engraver, why he could not give the dying ſaint of DOMINICHINO his true expreſſion *? Why he gave him that ghaſtly horror, inſtead of the ſerene languor of the original? The engraver may with juſtice ſay, he went as far as lines could go; but he wanted DOMINICHINO's pencil to give thoſe pallid touches, which alone could make his lines expreſſive.—Age alſo, and ſex, the bloom of youth, and the wan cheek of ſickneſs, are equally indebted for their moſt characteriſtic marks, to the pencil.—In *portrait*, the different hues of hair, and complexion;—in *animal-life* the various dies of furs, and plumage;—in *landſcape*, the peculiar tints of ſeaſons; of morning, and evening; the light azure of a ſummer-ſky; the ſultry glow of noon; the bluiſh, or purple tinge, which the mountain aſſumes, as it recedes, or approaches; the grey moſs upon the ruin; the variegated greens, and mellow browns of foliage, and broken ground: in ſhort, the colours of every part of nature, have a wonderful force in ſtrengthening the expreſſion

* JAC FREII's copy of DOMINICHINO's St. *Jerome*.

of

of objects.—In the room of all this, the deficient print has only to offer mere form, and the gradations of ſimple light. Hence the ſweet touches of the pencil of CLAUDE, mark his pictures with the ſtrongeſt expreſſions of nature, and render them invaluable; while his prints are generally the dirty ſhapes of ſomething, which he could not expreſs.

The idea alſo of *diſtant magnitude*, the print gives very imperfectly. It is expreſſed chiefly by colour. Air, which is naturally blue, is the medium through which we ſee; and every object participates of this blueneſs. When the diſtance is ſmall, the tinge is imperceptible: as it increaſes, the tinge grows ſtronger; and when the object is very remote, it intirely loſes its natural colour, and becomes blue. And indeed this is ſo familiar a criterion of diſtance, at leaſt with thoſe who live in mountainous countries, that if the object be viſible at all, after it has received the full *æther-tinge*, if I may ſo ſpeak, the ſight immediately judges it to be very large. The eye ranging over the plains of Egypt, and catching the blue point of a pyramid, from the colour concludes

concludes the diſtance; and is ſtruck with the magnitude of an object, which, through ſuch a ſpace, can exhibit form.—Here the print fails: this criterion of diſtant magnitude, it is unable to give.

I cannot forbear inſerting here a ſhort criticiſm on a paſſage in VIRGIL. The poet deſcribing a tower retiring from a veſſel in full ſail, ſays,

Protinus aërias Phæacum abſcondimus arces.

RUÆUS, and other commentators, explain *aëreas* by *altas*, or ſome equivalent word; which is magnifying an idea which in nature ſhould be diminiſhed. The idea of magnitude is certainly not the ſtriking idea that ariſes from a retiring object: I ſhould rather imagine that VIRGIL, who was of all poets perhaps the moſt pictureſque, meant to give us an idea of colour, rather than of ſhape; the tower, from its diſtance, having now aſſumed the *aërial* tinge.

The print equally fails, when the medium itſelf receives a foreign tinge from a ſtrength of

of colour behind it. The idea of horror, impreſſed by an expanſe of air glowing, in the night, with diſtant fire, cannot be raiſed by black and white. VANDERVELDE has often given us a good idea of the dreadful glare of a fleet in flames: but it were ridiculous for an engraver to attempt ſuch a ſubject; becauſe he cannot expreſs that idea, which principally illuſtrates his ſtory.

Tranſparency, again, the print is unable to expreſs. Tranſparency is the united tinge of two colours, one behind the other; each of which, in part, diſcovers itſelf ſingly. If you employ one colour only, you have the idea of opaqueneſs. A fine carnation is a white tranſparent ſkin, ſpread over a mulitude of ſmall blood veſſels, which bluſh through it. When the breath departs, theſe little fountains of life ceaſe to flow: the bloom fades; and livid paleneſs, the colour of death, ſucceeds. —The happy pencil marks both theſe effects. It ſpreads the glow of health over the cheek of beauty; and with equal facility it expreſſes the cold, wan, tint of human clay. The print can expreſs neither; repreſenting, in

the ſame dry manner, the bright tranſparency of the one, and the inert opaqueneſs of the other.

Laſtly, the print fails in the expreſſion of *poliſhed bodies;* which are indebted for their chief luſtre to *reflected colours*. The print indeed goes farther here, than in the caſe of tranſparency. In this it can do very little; in *poliſhed bodies*, it can at leaſt give *reflected ſhapes*. It can ſhew the *forms* of hanging woods upon the edges of the lake; though unable to give the kindred tinge. But in many caſes the *poliſhed* body receives the *tinge*, without the *ſhape*. Here the engraver is wholly deficient: he knows not how to ſtain the gleaming ſilver with the purple liquor it contains; nor is he able to give the hero's armour its higheſt poliſh from the tinge of the crimſon veſt, which covers it.

A ſingle word upon the ſubject of *execution*, ſhall conclude theſe remarks. Here the advantage lies wholly on the ſide of painting. *That* manner which can beſt give the idea of the

the ſurface of an object, is the beſt; and the lines of the fineſt engraving are harſh in compariſon of the ſmooth flow of the pencil. *Mezzotinto*, though deficient in ſome reſpects, is certainly in this the happieſt mode of execution; and the ancient *wooden print*, in which the middle tint is uſed, has a ſoftneſs, when well executed, which neither etching, nor engraving can give.

CHAP. II.

Obſervations on the different Kinds of Prints.

THERE are three kinds of Prints, *engravings*, *etchings*, and *mezzotintos*. The characteriſtic of the firſt is *ſtrength*; of the ſecond, *freedom*; and of the third, *ſoftneſs*. All theſe, however, may in ſome degree be found in each.

From the ſhape of the engraver's tool, each ſtroke is an angular inciſion; which muſt of courſe give the line ſtrength, and firmneſs; if it be not very tender. From ſuch a line alſo, as it is a deliberate one, correctneſs may be expected; but no great freedom: for it is a laboured line, ploughed through the metal; and muſt neceſſarily, in a degree, want eaſe.

Unlimited *freedom*, on the other hand, is the characteriſtic of *etching*. The needle, gliding along

along the ſurface of the copper, meets no reſiſtance; and eaſily takes any turn the hand pleaſes to give it. Etching indeed is mere drawing: and may be practiſed with the ſame facility.—But as *aqua-fortis* bites in an *equable* manner, it cannot give the lines that ſtrength, which they receive from a pointed graver cutting into the copper. Beſides, it is difficult to prevent its biting the plate *all over* alike. The *diſtant parts* indeed may eaſily be covered with wax, or varniſh, and the *general effect* of the *keeping* preſerved; but to give each *ſmaller* part its proper relief, and to *harmonize* the *whole*, requires ſo many different degrees of ſtrength, ſuch eaſy tranſitions from one into another, that aqua-fortis alone is not equal to it. Here, therefore, engraving hath the advantage; which by a ſtroke, deep or tender, at the artiſt's pleaſure, can vary ſtrength and faintneſs in any degree.

As engraving, therefore, and etching have their reſpective advantages, and deficiencies, artiſts have endeavoured to unite their powers; and to correct the faults of each, by joining the *freedom* of the one, with the *ſtrength* of the

the other. In moſt of our modern prints, the plate is firſt etched, and afterwards ſtrengthened, and finiſhed by the graver. And when this is *well* done, it has a happy effect. The flatneſs, which is the conſequence of an equable ſtrength of ſhade, is taken off; and the print gains a new effect, by the relief given to thoſe parts which *hang* (in the painter's language) on the parts behind them.—But great art is neceſſary in this buſineſs. We ſee many a print, which wanted only a *few* touches, receive afterwards ſo *many*, as to become laboured, heavy, and diſguſting.

In *etching*, we have the greateſt variety of excellent prints. The caſe is, it is ſo much the ſame as *drawing*, that we have the very works themſelves of the moſt celebrated maſters: many of whom have left behind them prints in this way; which, however ſlight and incorrect, will always have ſomething *maſterly*, and of courſe *beautiful* in them.

In the muſcling of human figures, of any conſiderable ſize, *engraving* hath undoubtedly

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the advantage of *etching*. The ſoft and delicate tranſitions, from light to ſhade, which are there required, cannot be ſo well expreſſed by the needle: and, in general, *large prints* require a ſtrength which *etching* cannot give; and are therefore fit ſubjects for *engraving*.

Etching, on the other hand, is more particularly adapted to ſketches, and ſlight deſigns: which, if executed by an engraver, would entirely loſe their freedom; and with it their beauty. Landſcape too, in general, is the object of *etching*. The foliage of trees, ruins, ſky, and indeed every part of landſcape, requires the utmoſt freedom. In finiſhing an *etched* landſcape with the *tool* (as it is called), too much care cannot be taken to prevent heavineſs. We remarked before the nicety of touching upon an etched plate; but in landſcape the buſineſs is peculiarly delicate. The foregrounds, and the boles of ſuch trees as are placed upon them, may require a few ſtrong touches; and here and there a few harmonizing ſtrokes will add to the effect: but if the engraver venture much farther, he has good luck if he do no miſchief.

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An *engraved* plate, unleſs it be cut very ſlightly, will caſt off ſeven or eight hundred good impreſſions: and yet this depends, in ſome degree, on the hardneſs of the copper. An *etched* plate will not give above two hundred; unleſs it be eaten very deep, and then it may perhaps give three hundred. After that, the plate muſt be retouched, or the impreſſions will be faint.

Before I conclude the ſubject of etching, I ſhould mention an excellent mode of practiſing it on a *ſoft ground;* which has been lately brought into uſe, and approaches ſtill nearer to drawing, than the common mode. On a thin paper, ſomewhat larger than the plate, you trace a correct outline of the drawing you intend to etch. You then fold the paper, thus traced, over the plate; and laying the original drawing before you, finiſh the outline on the traced one with a black lead pencil. Every ſtroke of the pencil, which you make on one ſide, licks up the ſoft ground on the other. So that when you have finiſhed your drawing with

black-lead, and take the paper off the plate, you will find a complete, and very beautiful drawing on the reverſe of the paper; and the etching likewiſe as complete on the copper. You then proceed to bite it with aqua-fortis, in the common mode of etching: only as your ground is ſofter, the aqua-fortis muſt be weaker.

Beſides theſe ſeveral methods of engraving on *copper*, we have prints engraven on pewter, and on wood. The pewter plate gives a coarſeneſs and dirtineſs to the print, which is often diſagreeable. But engraving upon wood is capable of great beauty. Of this ſpecies of engraving more ſhall elſewhere be ſaid.

Mezzotinto is very different from either *engraving* or *etching*. In theſe you cut out the *ſhades* on a ſmooth plate. In *mezzotinto*, the plate is covered with a rough ground; and you ſcrape the lights. The plate would otherwiſe give an impreſſion entirely black.

Since the time of its invention by Prince RUPERT, as is commonly ſuppoſed, the art of

of ſcraping *mezzotintos* is greatly more improved than either of its ſiſter arts. Some of the earlieſt *etchings* are perhaps the beſt; and *engraving*, ſince the times of GOLTZIUS and MULLER, hath not perhaps made any great advances. But *mezzotinto*, compared with its original ſtate, is, at this day, almoſt a new art. If we examine ſome of the modern pieces of workmanſhip in this way by our beſt mezzotinto-ſcrapers, they as much exceed the works of WHITE and SMITH, as thoſe maſters did BECKET and SIMONS. It muſt be owned, at the ſame time, they have better originals to copy. KNELLER's portraits are very paltry, compared with thoſe of our modern artiſts; and are ſcarce ſuſceptible of any effects of light and ſhade. As to Prince RUPERT's works, I never ſaw any, which were *certainly* known to be his: but thoſe I have ſeen for his, were executed in the ſame black, harſh, diſagreeable manner, which appears ſo ſtrong in the maſters who ſucceeded him. The invention however was noble; and the early maſters have the credit of it: but the truth is, the ingenious mechanic hath been called in to the painter's aid; and hath invented a manner of

laying ground, wholly unknown to the earlier maſters: and they who are acquainted with *mezzotinto*, know the *ground* to be a very capital conſideration.

The characteriſtic of *mezzotinto* is *ſoftneſs*; which adapts it chiefly to portrait, or hiſtory, with a few figures, and theſe not too ſmall. Nothing, except paint, can expreſs fleſh more naturally, or the flowing of hair, or the folds of drapery, or the catching lights of armour. In engraving and etching we muſt get over the prejudices of croſs lines, which exiſt on no natural bodies: but *mezzotinto* gives us the ſtrongeſt repreſentation of the real *ſurface*. If however, the figures are too crowded, it wants ſtrength to detach the ſeveral parts with a proper relief: and if they are very ſmall, it wants preciſion, which can only be given by an outline; or, as in painting, by a different tint. In miniature-works alſo, the unevenneſs of the ground will occaſion bad drawing, and awkwardneſs—in the extremities eſpecially. Some inferior artiſts have endeavoured to remedy this, by terminating their figures with an engraved, or etched line: but they have tried the experiment with bad ſucceſs. The ſtrength of the line, and the ſoftneſs of the ground, accord

accord ill together. I ſpeak not here of that judicious mixture of *etching* and *mezzotinto*, which was formerly uſed by WHITE; and which our beſt mezzotinto-ſcrapers at preſent uſe, to give a ſtrength to particular parts; I ſpeak only of a harſh, and injudicious lineal termination.

Mezzotinto excels each of the other ſpecies of prints, in its capacity of receiving the moſt beautiful effects of light and ſhade: as it can the moſt happily unite them, by blending them inſenſibly together.—Of this REMBRANDT ſeems to have been aware. He had probably ſeen ſome of the firſt mezzotintos; and admiring the effect, endeavoured to produce it in etching, by a variety of interſecting ſcratches.

You cannot well caſt off more than an hundred good impreſſions from a mezzotinto plate. The rubbing of the hand ſoon wears it ſmooth: And yet by conſtantly repairing it, it may be made to give four or five hundred, with tolerable ſtrength. The firſt impreſſions are not always the beſt. They are too black and harſh. You will commonly have the beſt impreſſions from the fortieth to the ſixtieth: the harſh edges will be ſoftened down; and yet there will be ſpirit and ſtrength enough left.

I ſhould not conclude theſe obſervations without mentioning the manner of working with the *dry needle*, as it is called; a manner between etching and engraving. It is performed by cutting the copper with a ſteel point, held like a pencil; and differs from etching only in the force with which you work. This method is uſed by all engravers in their ſkies, and other tender parts; and ſome of them carry it into ſtill more general uſe.

Since the laſt edition of this work was publiſhed, a new mode of etching hath come much into uſe, called aquatinta. It is ſo far ſimilar to the common mode of etching, that the ſhadows are bitten into copper by aqua-fortis, from which the lights are defended by a prepared, *granulated* ground. Through the minute interſtices of this ground the aqua-fortis is admitted, and forms a kind of waſh. In the compoſition of this *granulation*, the great ſecret of the art, I underſtand, conſiſts; and different artiſts have their different modes of preparing their ground. Some alſo ſtrengthen the aquatinta waſh by the uſe of

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the needle, as in common etching; which, in landſcape eſpecially, has a good effect. The ſecret of the art however, does not entirely conſiſt in preparing, and laying on the ground. Much experience is neceſſary in the management of it.

The great advantage of this mode of etching is, that it comes nearer the idea of drawing, than any other ſpecies of working on copper: the ſhades are thrown in by a waſh, as if with a bruſh. It is alſo, when perfectly underſtood, well calculated for diſpatch. In general indeed, it ſeems better adapted to a rough ſketch, than a finiſhed work; yet in ſkilful hands, when aſſiſted by the needle, or the engraver's tool, it may be carried to a great height of elegant finiſhing.

On the other hand, the great diſadvantage of this mode of etching ariſes from the difficulty of making the ſhades graduate ſoftly into the lights. When the artiſt has made too harſh an edge, and wiſhes to burniſh it off, there is often a middle tint below it: in burniſhing off the one, he diſturbs the other; and inſtead of leaving a ſoft graduating edge, he introduces, in its room, an edging of light.

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The aquatinta mode of etching was firſt introduced into England, though but little known, about thirty, or forty years ago, by a Frenchman of the name of La Prince: but whether he was the inventor of it, I never heard. It has ſince been improved by ſeveral artiſts. Mr. Sandby has uſed it very happily in ſeveral of his prints. Mr. Jukes alſo, and Mr. Malton have done ſome good things in this way: but, as far as I can judge, Mr. Alken has carried it to the higheſt degree of perfection; and has ſome ſecret in preparing, and managing his ground, which gives his prints a ſuperior effect.

CHAP. III.

Characters of the moſt noted Maſters.

MASTERS IN HISTORY.

ALBERT DURER, though not the inventor, was one of the firſt improvers of the art of engraving. He was a German painter, and at the ſame time a man of letters, and a philoſopher. It may be added in his praiſe, that he was the intimate friend of Eraſmus; who reviſed, it is ſuppoſed, ſome of the pieces which he publiſhed. He was a man of buſineſs alſo; and was, during many years, the leading magiſtrate of Nuremburg.—His prints, conſidered as the firſt efforts of a new art, have great merit. Nay, we may add, that it is aſtoniſhing to ſee a new art, in its earlieſt eſſays, carried to ſuch a length. In ſome of thoſe prints, which he executed on copper, the engraving is elegant to a great degree. His *Hell-ſcene* particularly, which was engraved in the year 1513, is as highly finiſhed

finiſhed a print as ever was engraved, and as happily finiſhed. The labour he has beſtowed upon it, has its full effect. In his wooden prints too we are ſurpriſed to ſee ſo much meaning, in ſo early a maſter; the heads ſo well marked; and every part ſo well executed. —This artiſt ſeems to have underſtood the principles of deſign. His compoſition too is often pleaſing; and his drawing generally good: but he knows very little of the management of light; and ſtill leſs of grace: and yet his ideas are purer, and more elegant, than we could have ſuppoſed from the awkward archetypes, which his country and education afforded. He was certainly a man of a very extenſive genius; and, as *Vaſari* remarks, would have been an extraordinary artiſt, if he had had an Italian, inſtead of a German education. His prints are numerous. They were much admired in his own life-time, and eagerly bought up: which put his wife, who was a teaſing woman, on urging him to ſpend more time upon engraving, than he was inclined to do. He was rich, and choſe rather to practiſe his art as an amuſement, than as a buſineſs. He died in the year 1527.

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The immediate ſucceſſors, and imitators of ALBERT DURER were LUCAS VAN LEIDEN, ALDGRAVE, PENS, HISBEN, and ſome others of leſs note. Their works are very much in their maſter's ſtyle; and were the admiration of an age which had ſeen nothing better. The beſt of ALDGRAVE'S works are two or three ſmall pieces of the ſtory of Lot.

GOLTZIUS flouriſhed a little after the death of theſe maſters; and carried engraving to a great height. He was a native of Germany, where he learned his art: but travelling afterwards into Italy, he improved his ideas. We plainly diſcover in him a mixture of the Flemiſh and Italian ſchools. His forms have ſometimes a degree of elegance in them; but, in general, the Dutch maſter prevails. GOLTZIUS is often happy in *deſign* and *diſpoſition*; and fails moſt in the *diſtribution of light*. But his chief excellence lies in *execution*. He engraves in a noble, firm, expreſſive manner; which hath ſcarce been excelled by any ſuc-

ceeding .maſters. There is a variety too in his mode of execution, which is very pleaſing. His print of the *circumciſion* is one of the beſt of his works. The ſtory is well told; the groups agreeably diſpoſed; and the execution admirable: but the figures are Dutch; and the whole, through the want of a proper diſtribution of ſhade, is only a glaring maſs.

MULLER engraved very much in the ſtyle of GOLTZIUS—I think in a ſtill bolder and firmer manner. We have no where greater maſter-pieces in execution, than the works of this artiſt exhibit. The *baptiſm of* JOHN is perhaps the moſt beautiful ſpecimen of bold engraving, that is extant.

ABRAHAM BLOEMART was a Dutch maſter alſo, and contemporary with GOLTZIUS. We are not informed what particular means of improvement he had; but it is certain he deſigned in a more elegant taſte, than any of his countrymen. His figures are often graceful; excepting only, that he gives them ſometimes an affected twiſt; which

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is ſtill more conſpicuous in the fingers; an affectation which we ſometimes alſo find in the prints of GOLTZIUS.—The *reſurrection of* LAZARUS is one of BLOEMART'S maſterpieces; in which are many faults, and many beauties; both very characteriſtic.

While the Dutch maſters were thus carrying the art of engraving to ſo great a height, it was introduced into Italy by ANDREA MANTEGNA; to whom the Italians aſcribe the invention of it. The paintings of this maſter abound in noble paſſages, but are formal and diſagreeable. We have a ſpecimen of them at Hampton-Court, in the triumph of JULIUS CÆSAR.—His prints, which are ſaid to have been engraved on tin plates, are tranſcripts from the ſame ideas. We ſee in them the chaſte, correct out-line, and noble ſimplicity of the Roman ſchool; but we are to expect nothing more; not the leaſt attempt towards an agreeable *whole*.——And indeed, we ſhall perhaps find, in general, that the maſters of the Roman ſchool were more ſtudious of thoſe eſſentials of painting, which regard the *parts*; and the Flemiſh

maſters,

maſters, of thoſe, which regard the *whole*. The former therefore drew better *figures*; the latter made better *pictures*.

MANTEGNA was ſucceeded by PARMIGIANO and PALMA, both maſters of great reputation. PARMIGIANO having formed the moſt accurate taſte on a thorough ſtudy of the works of RAPHAEL, and MICHAEL ANGELO, publiſhed many ſingle figures, and ſome deſigns engraven on wood, which abounded with every kind of beauty; if we may form a judgment of them from the few which we ſometimes meet with. Whether PARMIGIANO invented the art of engraving on wood, does not certainly appear. His pretenſions to the invention of etching are leſs diſputable. In this way he publiſhed many ſlight pieces, which do him great credit. In the midſt of his labours, he was interrupted by a knaviſh engraver, who pillaged him of all his plates. Unable to bear the loſs, he forſwore his art, and abandoned himſelf to chemiſtry.

PALMA

PALMA was too much employed as a painter to have much leiſure for etching. He hath left ſeveral prints, however, behind him; which are remarkable for the delicacy of the drawing, and the freedom of the execution. He etches in a looſe, but maſterly manner. His prints are ſcarce; and indeed we ſeldom meet with any that deſerve more than the name of ſketches.

FRANCIS PARIA ſeems to have copied the manner of PALMA with great ſucceſs. But his prints are ſtill ſcarcer than his maſter's; nor have we a ſufficient number of them, to enable us to form much judgment of his merit.

But the great improver of the art of engraving on wood, and who at once carried it to a degree of perfection, which hath not ſince been exceeded, was ANDREA ANDREANI, of Mantua. The works of this maſter are remarkable for the freedom, ſtrength, and ſpirit

of the execution; the elegant correctneſs of the drawing; and in general for their effect. Few prints come ſo near the idea of painting. They have a force, which a pointed tool on copper cannot reach: and the waſh, of which the middle tint is compoſed, adds often the ſoftneſs of drawing. But the works of this maſter are ſeldom ſeen in perfection. They are ſcarce; and when we do meet with them, it is a chance if the impreſſions be good: and very much of the beauty of theſe prints depends on the goodneſs of the impreſſion. For often the outline is left hard, the middle tint being loſt; and ſometimes the middle tint is left without its proper termination. So that on the whole, I ſhould not judge this to be the happieſt mode of engraving.

Among the ancient Italian maſters, we cannot omit MARK ANTONIO; and AUGUSTIN of Venice. They are both celebrated; and have handed down to us many engravings from the works of RAPHAEL: but their *antiquity*, not their *merit*, ſeems to have recommended them. Their execution is harſh, and formal to the laſt degree: and if their prints

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give us any idea of the works of RAPHAEL, we may well wonder, as PICART obſerves, how that maſter got his reputation.—But we cannot, perhaps, in England, form an adequate idea of theſe maſters. I have been told, their beſt works are ſo much valued in Italy, that they are engroſſed there by the curious: that very few of them find their way into other countries; and that what we have, are, in general, but the refuſe.

FREDERIC BAROCCHI was born at Urbin; where the genius of RAPHAEL inſpired him. In his early youth he travelled to Rome: and giving himſelf up to intenſe ſtudy, he acquired a great name in painting. At his leiſure hours he etched a few prints from his own deſigns; which are highly finiſhed, and executed with great ſoftneſs and delicacy. The *Salutation* is his capital performance: of which we ſeldom meet with any impreſſions, but thoſe taken from the retouched plate, which are very harſh.

ANTHONY TEMPESTA was a native of Florence, but reſided chiefly at Rome; where he was employed in painting by GREGORY XIII. ——His prints are very numerous: all from his own deſigns. Battles and huntings are the ſubjects in which he moſt delighted. His merit lies in expreſſion, both in feature and in action; in the grandeur of his ideas; and in the fertility of his invention. His figures are often elegant, and graceful; and his heads marked with great ſpirit, and correctneſs. His horſes, though fleſhy and ill drawn, and evidently never copied from nature, are, however, noble animals, and diſplay an endleſs variety of beautiful actions.—His imperfections at the ſame time, are glaring. His compoſition is generally bad. Here and there you have a good group; ſeldom an agreeable whole. He had not the art of preſerving his back-grounds tender; ſo that we are not to expect any effect of keeping. His execution is harſh; and he is totally ignorant of the diſtribution of light.—But notwithſtanding all his faults, ſuch is his merit, that, as ſtudies at leaſt, his prints deſerve a much higher rank in the cabinets of con-

connoiſſeurs, than they generally find; you can ſcarce pick out one of them, which does not furniſh materials for an excellent compoſition.

AUGUSTIN CARACCI has left a few etchings; which are admired for the delicacy of the drawing, and the freedom of the execution. But there is great flatneſs in them, and want of ſtrength. Etchings, indeed, in this ſtyle are rather meant as ſketches, than as finiſhed prints.—I have heard his print of St. Jerome much commended; but I find no remarks upon it in my own notes.

GUIDO'S etchings, moſt of which are ſmall, are eſteemed for the ſimplicity of the deſign; the elegance and correctneſs of the outline; and that grace, for which this maſter is generally—perhaps too generally eſteemed. The extremities of his figures are particularly touched with great accuracy. But we have the ſame flatneſs in the works of GUIDO, which we find in thoſe of his maſter CARACCI; accompanied, at the ſame time, with leſs free-

dom. The *parts* are finiſhed; but the *whole* neglected.

CANTARINI copied the manner of GUIDO, as PARIA did that of PALMA; and ſo happily, that it is often difficult to diſtinguiſh the works of theſe two maſters.

CALLOT was little acquainted with any of the grand principles of painting: of compoſition, and the management of light he was totally ignorant. But though he could not make a picture, he was admirably ſkilled in drawing a figure. His attitudes are generally graceful, when they are not affected; his expreſſion ſtrong; his drawing correct; and his execution maſterly, though rather laboured. His *Fair* is a good epitome of his works. Conſidered as a *whole*, it is a confuſed jumble of ideas; but the *parts*, ſeparately examined, appear the work of a maſter. The ſame character may be given of his moſt famous work, the *Miſeries of War*; in which there is more expreſſion, both in action and feature, than was ever perhaps ſhewn in ſo ſmall a compaſs. And yet I know not whether

whether his *Beggars* be not the more capital performance. In the *Miſeries of War*, he aims at compoſition, in which he rarely ſucceeds: his *Beggars* are detached figures, in which lay his ſtrength. Though the works of this maſter are generally ſmall, I have ſeen one of a large ſize. It conſiſts of two prints; each of them near four feet ſquare, repreſenting the ſiege of Toulon. They are rather indeed perſpective plans, than pictures. The pains employed on them, is aſtoniſhing. They contain multitudes of figures; and, in miniature, repreſent all the humour, and all the employment of a camp.——I ſhall only add, that a vein of drollery runs through all the deſigns of this maſter: which ſometimes, when he chuſes to indulge it freely, as in the *Temptation of St.* ANTHONY, diſplays itſelf in a very facetious manner.

COUNT GAUDE contracted a friendſhip at Rome with ADAM ELSHAMAR; from whoſe deſigns he engraved a few prints. GAUDE was a young nobleman on his travels; and never practiſed engraving as a profeſſion. This would call for indulgence, if his prints wanted it: but in their way, they are beautiful; though

on the whole, formal, and unpleaſant. They are highly finiſhed; and this correctneſs has deprived them of freedom. Moon-lights, and torch-lights are the ſubjects he generally chuſes; and he often preſerves the effects of theſe different lights. His prints are generally ſmall. I know only one, the *Flight into Egypt*, of a larger ſize.

SALVATOR ROSA *painted* landſcape more than hiſtory; but his *prints* are chiefly hiſtorical. He was bred a painter; and underſtood his art; if we except the *management of light*, of which he ſeems to have been ignorant. The capital landſcape of this maſter at Chiſwick, is a noble picture. The contrivance, the compoſition, the diſtances, the figures, and all the parts and appendages of it are fine: but in point of light it might perhaps have been improved, if the middle ground, where the figures of the ſecond diſtance ſtand, had been thrown into ſun-ſhine. —In *deſign*, and generally in *compoſition*, SALVATOR is often happy. His figures, which he drew in good taſte, are graceful, and expreſſive, well grouped, and varied in agreeable attitudes. In the legs, it muſt be owned, he

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is a *manneriſt:* they are well drawn; but all caſt in one mould. There is a ſtiffneſs too in the backs of his extended hands: the palms are beautiful. But theſe are trivial criticiſms. —His *manner* is ſlight; ſo as not to admit either ſoftneſs or effect: yet the ſimplicity and elegance of it are pleaſing; and bear that ſtrong characteriſtic of a maſter's hand, *ſibi quivis ſperet idem.*——One thing in his manner of ſhading, is diſagreeable. He will often ſhade a *face* half over with long lines; which, in ſo ſmall and delicate an object, gives an unpleaſant abruptneſs. It is treating a face like an egg: no diſtinction of feature is obſerved.—— SALVATOR was a man of genius, and of learning: both which he has found frequent opportunities of diſplaying in his works. His ſtyle is grand; every object that he introduces is of the heroic kind; and his ſubjects in general ſhew an intimacy with ancient hiſtory, and mythology.——A roving diſpoſition, to which he is ſaid to have given a full ſcope, ſeems to have added a wildneſs to all his thoughts. We are told, he ſpent the early part of his life in a troop of banditti: and that the rocky and deſolate ſcenes, in which he was accuſtomed to take refuge, furniſhed him with thoſe romantic ideas

ideas in landſcape, of which he is ſo exceedingly fond; and in the deſcription of which he ſo much excels. His *Robbers*, as his detached figures are commonly called, are ſuppoſed to have been taken from the life.

REMBRANDT'S excellency, as a painter, lay in colouring; which he poſſeſſed in ſuch perfection, that it almoſt ſcreens every fault in his pictures. His prints, deprived of this palliative, have only his inferior qualifications to recommend them. Theſe are expreſſion, and ſkill in the management of light, execution, and ſometimes compoſition. I mention them in the order in which he ſeems to have poſſeſſed them. His expreſſion has the moſt force in the character of age. He marks as ſtrongly as the hand of time. He poſſeſſes too, in a great degree, that inferior kind of expreſſion, which gives its proper, and characteriſtic touch to drapery, fur, metal, and every object he repreſents.—His management of light conſiſts chiefly in making a very ſtrong contraſt; which has often a good effect: and yet in many of his prints, there is no effect at all; which gives us reaſon to think, he either

ther had no principles, or publiſhed ſuch prints before his principles were aſcertained.—His execution is peculiar to himſelf. It is rough, or neat, as he meant a ſketch, or a finiſhed piece; but always free and maſterly. It produces its effect by ſtrokes interſected in every direction; and comes nearer the idea of painting than the execution of any other maſter in etching—Never painter was more at a loſs than REMBRANDT, for that ſpecies of grace, which is neceſſary to ſupport an elevated character. While he keeps within the ſphere of his genius, and contents himſelf with low ſubjects, he deſerves any praiſe. But when he attempts beauty, or dignity, it were good-natured to ſuppoſe, he means only burleſque and caricature. He is a ſtrong contraſt to SALVATOR. The one drew all his ideas from nature, as ſhe appears with grace and elegance: The other caught her in her meaneſt images; and transferred thoſe images into the higheſt characters. Hence SALVATOR exalts banditti into heroes: REMBRANDT degrades patriarchs into beggars. REMBRANDT, indeed, ſeems to have affected awkwardneſs. He was a man of humour; and would laugh at thoſe artiſts who ſtudied the antique. "I'll

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ſhew you my antiques," he would cry; and then he would carry his friends into a room furniſhed with head-dreſſes, draperies, houſe-hold-ſtuff, and inſtruments of all kinds: "Theſe," he would add, "are worth all your antiques."—His beſt etching is that, which goes by the name of the *hundred-guilders-print*; which is in ſuch eſteem, that I have known thirty guineas given for a good impreſſion of it. In this all his excellencies are united: and I might add, his imperfections alſo. Age and wretchedneſs are admirably deſcribed; but the principal figure is ridiculouſly mean.—REMBRANDT is ſaid to have left behind him near three hundred prints; none of which are dated before 1628; none after 1659. They were in ſuch eſteem, even in his own life time, that he is ſaid to have retouched ſome of them four or five times.

PETER TESTA ſtudied upon a plan very different from that, either of SALVATOR, or REMBRANDT. Thoſe maſters drew their ideas from nature: TESTA, from what he eſteemed a ſuperior model—the antique. Smitten with the love of painting, this artiſt travelled

velled to Rome in the habit of a pilgrim; deſtitute of every mean of improvement, but what mere genius furniſhed. He had not even intereſt to procure a recommendation; nor had he any addreſs to ſubſtitute in its room. The works of ſculpture fell moſt obviouſly in his way; and to theſe he applied himſelf with ſo much induſtry, copying them over, and over, that he is ſaid to have gotten them all by heart. Thus qualified, he took up the pencil. But he ſoon found the ſchool, in which he had ſtudied, an inſufficient one to form a painter. He had neglected colouring; and his pictures were in no eſteem. I have heard it ſaid, that ſome of his pictures were excellent: and that if the houſe of Medici had continued to direct the taſte of Italy, his works would have taken the lead among the firſt productions of the age. But it was TESTA's misfortune to live when the arts were under a leſs diſcerning patronage: and P. DA CORTONA, who was TESTA's rival, though far inferior to him in genius, carried the palm. Diſappointed and mortified, he threw aſide his pallet, and applied himſelf to etching; in which he became a thorough proficient.—His prints have great merit; though they are little eſteemed. We are ſeldom, indeed to expect

pect a coherency of design in any of them. An enthusiastic vein runs through most of his compositions; and it is not an improbable conjecture, that his head was a little disturbed. He generally crouds into his pieces such a jumble of inconsistent ideas; that it is difficult sometimes only to guess at what he aims. He was as little acquainted with the distribution of light, as with the rules of design: and yet, notwithstanding all this, his works contain an infinite fund of entertainment. There is an exuberance of fancy in him, which, with all its wildness, is agreeable: his ideas are sublime and noble; his drawing is elegantly correct; his heads exhibit a wonderful variety of characters; and are touched with uncommon spirit, and expression; his figures are graceful, rather too nearly allied to the antique; his groups often beautiful; and his execution, in his best etchings, (for he is sometimes unequal to himself,) very masterly.* Perhaps, no prints afford more useful studies for a painter.——The *Procession of* SILENUS, if we may guess at so confused a design, may illustrate all that hath been said. The *whole* is as inco-

* Some of his works are etched by CÆS. TESTA.

herent,

herent, as the *parts* are beautiful.——This unfortunate artiſt was drowned in the Tyber; and it is left uncertain, whether by accident or deſign.

SPANIOLET etched a few prints in a very ſpirited manner. No maſter underſtood better the force of every touch. SILENUS *and* BACCHUS, and the *Martyrdom of St.* BARTHOLOMEW, are the beſt of his hiſtorical prints: and yet theſe are inferior to ſome of his caricatures, which are admirably executed.

MICHAEL DORIGNY, or OLD DORIGNY, as he is often called, to diſtinguiſh him from NICHOLAS, had the misfortune to be the ſon-in-law of SIMON VOUET; whoſe works he engraved, and whoſe imperfections he copied. His execution is free, and he preſerves the lights extremely well on ſingle figures: his drapery too is natural, and eaſy: but his drawing is below criticiſm; in the extremities eſpecially. In this his maſter miſled him. VOUET excelled in compoſition; of which we have many beautiful inſtances in DORIGNY's prints.

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VILLAMENA was inferior to few engravers. If he be deficient in ſtrength and effect, there is a delicacy in his manner, which is inimitable. One of his beſt prints is, the *Deſcent from the Croſs.*——But his works are ſo rare, that we can ſcarce form an adequate idea of his merit.

STEPHEN DE LA BELLA was a minute genius. His manner wants ſtrength for any larger work; but in ſmall objects it appears to advantage: there is great freedom in it, and uncommon neatneſs. His figures are touched with ſpirit; and ſometimes his compoſition is good: but he ſeldom diſcovers any ſkill in the management of light; though the defect is leſs ſtriking, becauſe of the ſmallneſs of his pieces. His *Pont Neuf* will give us an idea of his works. Through the bad management of the light, it makes no appearance as a *whole*; though the compoſition, if we except the modern architecture, is tolerable. But the figures are marked with great beauty; and the diſtances extremely fine. —Some of his ſingle heads are very elegant.

La Fage's works conſiſt chiefly of ſketches. The great excellency of this maſter lay in drawing; in which he was perfectly ſkilled. However unfiniſhed his pieces are, they diſcover him to have been well acquainted with anatomy and proportion. There is very little in him beſides, that is valuable; grace, and expreſſion ſometimes; ſeldom compoſition: his figures are generally too much crouded, or too diffuſe. As for light and ſhade, he ſeems to have been totally ignorant of their effect; or he could never have ſhewn ſo bad a taſte, as to publiſh his deſigns without, at leaſt, a bare expreſſion of the maſſes of each. Indeed, we have poſitive proof, as well as negative. Where he has attempted an effect of light, he has only ſhewn how little he knew of it.—— His genius chiefly diſplays itſelf in the gambols of nymphs and ſatyrs; in routs and revels: but there is ſo much obſcenity in his works of this kind, that, although otherwiſe fine, they ſcarce afford an innocent amuſement.——In ſome of his prints, in which he has attempted the ſublimeſt characters, he has given them a wonderful dignity. Some of his figures of Chriſt

are not inferior to the ideas of RAPHAEL: and in a ſlight ſketch, intitled, *Vocation de Moyſe*, the Deity is introduced with ſurpriſing majeſty. —His beſt works are ſlightly etched from his drawings by ERTINGER; who has done juſtice to them.

BOLSWERT engraved the works of RUBENS, and in a ſtyle worthy of his maſter. You ſee the ſame free, and animated manner in both. It is ſaid that RUBENS touched his proofs: and it is probable; the ideas of the painter are ſo exactly transfuſed into the works of the engraver.

PONTIUS too engraved the works of RUBENS; and would have appeared a greater maſter, if he had not had ſuch a rival as BOLSWERT.

SCIAMINOSSI etched a few ſmall plates, of the *Myſteries of the Roſary*, in a maſterly ſtyle. There is no great beauty in the compoſition; but the drawing is good; the figures are gene-

rally graceful; and the heads touched with ſpirit.

ROMAN LE HOOGHE is inimitable in execution. Perhaps, no maſter etches in a freer and more ſpirited manner: there is a richneſs in it likewiſe, which we ſeldom meet with. His figures too are often good; but his compoſition is generally faulty: it is crouded, and confuſed. He knows little of the effect of light. There is a flutter in him too, which hurts an eye pleaſed with ſimplicity. His prints are generally hiſtorical. The *deluge at Coeverden* is finely deſcribed.—LE HOOGHE was much employed, by the authors of his time, in compoſing frontiſpieces; ſome of which are very beautiful.

LUIKEN etches in the manner of LE HOOGHE, but it is a leſs maſterly manner. His *Hiſtory of the Bible* is a great work; in which there are many good figures, and great freedom of execution: but poor compoſition, much confuſion, and little ſkill in the diſtribution of light. This maſter hath alſo etched a

book of various kinds of capital punifhment; amongft which, though the fubject is difguffing, there are many good prints.

GERRARD LAIRESSE etches in a loofe, and unfinifhed; but free, and maflerly manner. His light is often well diftributed; but his fhades have not fufficient ftrength to give his pieces effect. Though he was a Dutch painter, you fee nothing of the Dutchman in his works. His compofition is generally elegant and beautiful; efpecially where he has only a few figures to manage. His figures themfelves are graceful, and his expreffion ftrong.—It may be added, that his draperies are particularly excellent. The fimple and fublime ideas, which appear every where in his works, acquired him the title of the *Dutch* RAPHAEL; a title which he well deferves. LAIRESSE may be called an ethic painter. He commonly inculcates fome truth either in morals, or religion; which he illuftrates by a Latin fentence at the bottom of his print.

CASTIG-

CASTIGLIONE was an Italian painter of eminence. He drew human figures with grace and correctneſs: yet he generally choſe ſuch ſubjects as would admit the introduction of animal life, which often makes the more diſtinguiſhed part.——There is a ſimplicity in the deſigns of this maſter, which is beautiful. In compoſition he excels. Of his elegant groups we have many inſtances, in a ſet of prints, etched from his paintings, in a ſlight, free manner, by C. MACEE; particularly in thoſe of the *patriarchal journeyings*. He hath left us ſeveral of his *own* etchings, which are very valuable. The ſubjects, indeed, of ſome of them, are odd and fantaſtic; and the compoſition not equal to ſome prints we have from his paintings, by other hands; but the execution is greatly ſuperior. Freedom, ſtrength, and ſpirit, are eminent in them; and delicacy likewiſe, where he chuſes to finiſh highly; of which we have ſome inſtances.—One of his beſt prints is, the *entering of* NOAH *into the ark*. The compoſition; the diſtribution of light; the ſpirit and expreſſion, with which

the animals are touched; and the freedom of the execution, are all admirable.

TIEPOLO was a diſtinguiſhed maſter: but by his merit; rather than the number of his etchings. He was chiefly employed, I have heard, as a painter, in the Eſcurial, and other palaces in Spain. The work, on which his reputation as an etcher is founded, is a ſeries of twenty plates, about nine inches long, and ſeven broad. The ſubject of them is emblematical; but of difficult interpretation. They contain, however, a great variety of rich, and elegant compoſition; of excellent figures; and of fine old heads and characters. They are ſcarce; at leaſt, they have rarely fallen in my way.—— I have ſeen a few other prints by this maſter: but none, except theſe, which I have thought excellent. He was a ſtrange, whimſical man; and, perhaps, his beſt pieces were thoſe, in which he gave a looſe to the wildneſs of his imagination.

VANDER MUILEN has given us hiſtorical repreſentations of ſeveral modern battles.

Lewis

Lewis XIV. is his great hero. His prints are generally large, and contain many good figures, and agreeable groups: but they have no effect, and ſeldom produce a *whole*. A diſagreeable monotony (as the muſical people ſpeak) runs through them all.

OTHO VENIUS has entirely the air of an Italian, though of Dutch parentage. He had the honour of being maſter to RUBENS; who chiefly learned from him his knowledge of light and ſhade. This artiſt publiſhed a book of love-emblems; in which the Cupids are engraved with great elegance. His pieces of fabulous hiſtory have leſs merit.

GALESTRUZZI was an excellent artiſt. There is great firmneſs in his ſtroke; great preciſion; and, at the ſame time, great freedom. His drawing is good; his heads are well touched, and his draperies beautiful. He has etched ſeveral things from the antique; ſome of them, indeed, but indifferently. The beſt of his works, which I have ſeen, is the

Story of NIOBE, (a long, narrow print) from POLIDORE.

MELLAN was a whimſical engraver. He ſhadowed entirely with parallel lines; which he winds round the muſcles of his figures, and the folds of his draperies, with great variety and beauty. His manner is ſoft and delicate; but void of ſtrength and effect. His compoſitions of courſe make no *whole*, though his ſingle figures are often elegant. His ſaints and ſtatues are, in general, his beſt pieces. There is great expreſſion in many of the former; and his drapery is often incomparable. One of his beſt prints is inſcribed, *Per ſe ſurgens:* and another very good one, with this ſtrange paſſage from St. AUSTIN; *Ego evangelio non crederem, niſi me catholicæ eccleſiæ commoveret auctoritas.*—His head of Chriſt, effected by a ſingle ſpiral line, is a maſterly, but whimſical performance.

OSTADE's etchings, like his pictures, are admirable repreſentations of low life. They abound in humour and expreſſion; in which lies

lies their merit. They have little beſides to recommend them. His compoſition is generally very indifferent; and his execution no way remarkable. Sometimes, but ſeldom, you ſee an effect of light.

CORNELIUS BEGA etches very much in the manner of OSTADE; but with more freedom.

VAN TULDEN has nothing of the Dutch maſter in his deſign; which ſeems formed on the ſtudy of the antique. It is chaſte, elegant, and correct. His manner is rather firm, and diſtinct; than free, and ſpirited. His principal work is, *the voyage of* ULYSSES, *in fifty-eight plates;* in which we have a great variety of elegant attitudes, excellent characters of heads, good drawing; and though not much effect, yet often good grouping. His drapery is heavy.

JOSEPH PARROCELLE painted battles for LEWIS XIV. He etched alſo ſeveral of his own deſigns. The beſt of his works are eight

ſmall

ſmall battles, which are very ſcarce. Four of theſe are of a ſize larger than the reſt; of which, the *Battle*, and *Stripping the Slain*, are very fine. Of the four ſmaller, that entitled *Veſper* is the beſt —His manner is rough, free, and maſterly; and his knowledge of the effect of light conſiderable.—His greateſt undertaking was, the *Life of Chriſt*, in a ſeries of plates: but it is a haſty, and incorrect work. Moſt of the prints are mere ſketches: and many of them, even in that light, are bad; though the freedom of the manner is pleaſing in the worſt of them. The beſt plates are the 14th, 17th, 19th, 22d, 28th, 39th, 41ſt, 42d, and 43d.

V. LE FEBRE etched many deſigns from TITIAN and JULIO ROMANO, in a very miſerable manner. His drawing is bad; his drapery frittered; his lights ill-preſerved; and his execution diſguſting: and yet we find his works in capital collections.

BELLANGE's prints are highly finiſhed, and his execution is not amiſs. His figures alſo have ſomething in them, which looks like grace;

grace; and his light is tolerably well maſſed. But his heads are ill ſet on; his extremities incorrectly touched; his figures badly proportioned; and, in ſhort, his drawing in general very bad.

CLAUDE GILLOT was a French painter: but finding himſelf rivalled, he laid aſide his pencil, and employed himſelf entirely in etching. His common ſubjects are *dances* and *revels;* adorned with ſatyrs, nymphs, and fauns. By giving his ſylvans a peculiar caſt of eye, he has introduced a new kind of character. The invention, and fancy of this maſter are pleaſing; and his compoſition is often good. His manner is ſlight; which is the beſt apology for his bad drawing.

WATTEAU has great defects; and, it muſt be owned, great merit. He abounds in all that flutter, and affectation, which is ſo diſagreeable in the generality of French painters. But, at the ſame time, we acknowledge, he draws well; gives grace and delicacy to his figures; and produces often a beautiful effect

of

of light. I ſpeak, chiefly of ſuch of his works, as have been engraved by others.—He etched a few ſlight plates himſelf, with great freedom and elegance. The beſt of them are contained in a ſmall book of figures, in various dreſſes and attitudes.

CORNELIUS SCHUT excels chiefly in execution; ſometimes in compoſition: but he knows nothing of grace; and has, upon the whole, but little merit.

WILLIAM BAUR etches with great ſpirit. His largeſt works are hiſtorical. He has given us many of the ſieges and battles, which waſted Flanders in the ſixteenth century. They *may* be exact, and probably they *are;* but they are rather plans than pictures; and have little to recommend them but hiſtoric truth, and the freedom of the execution. BAUR's beſt prints are, characters of different nations; in which the peculiarities of each are well obſerved. His OVID is a poor performance.

COYPEL

COYPEL hath left a few prints of his own etching; the principal of which is, an *Ecce Homo*, touched with great ſpirit. Several of his own deſigns he etched, and afterwards put into the hands of engravers to finiſh. It is probable he overlooked the work: but we ſhould certainly have had better prints, if we had received them pure from his own needle. What they had loſt in force, would have been amply made up in ſpirit.

PICART was one of the moſt ingenious of the French engravers. His *imitations* are among the moſt entertaining of his works. The taſte of *his day*, ran wholly in favour of antiquity: "No modern maſters were worth looking at." PICART, piqued at ſuch prejudice, etched ſeveral pieces in imitation of ancient maſters; and ſo happily, that he almoſt out-did, in their own excellences, the artiſts whom he copied. Theſe prints were much admired, as the works of GUIDO, REMBRANDT, and others. Having had his joke, he publiſhed them under the title of *Impoſtures innocentes*.

centes.—PICART's own manner is highly finiſhed; yet, at the ſame time, rich, bold, and ſpirited: his prints are generally ſmall; and moſt of them from the deſigns of others. One of the beſt is from that beautiful compoſition of POUSSIN, in which *Truth is delivered by Time, from Envy.*

ARTHUR POND, our countryman, ſucceeded admirably in this method of imitation; in which he hath etched ſeveral valuable prints; particularly two oval landſcapes after SALVATOR—a monkey in red chalk after CARRACHE—two or three ruins after PANINI, and ſome others equally excellent.

But this method of imitation hath been moſt ſucceſsfully practiſed by *Count* CAYLUS, an ingenious French nobleman; whoſe works, in this way, are very voluminous. He hath ranſacked the French king's cabinet; and hath ſcarce left a maſter of any note, from whoſe drawings he hath not given us an excellent ſpecimen. Inſomuch, that if we had nothing remaining of thoſe maſters, but *Count* CAYLUS's works,

works, we ſhould not want a very ſufficient idea of them. So verſatile is his genius, that with the ſame eaſe he preſents us with an elegant outline from RAPHAEL, a rough ſketch from REMBRANDT, and a delicate portrait from VANDYKE.

LE CLERC was an excellent engraver; but chiefly in miniature. He immortalized ALEXANDER, and LEWIS XIV. in plates of four or five inches long. His genius ſeldom exceeds theſe dimenſions; within which he can draw up twenty thouſand men with great dexterity. No artiſt, except CALLOT and DELLA BELLA, could touch a ſmall figure with ſo much ſpirit. He ſeems to have imitated CALLOT's manner; but his ſtroke is neither ſo firm, nor ſo maſterly.

PETER BARTOLI etched with freedom; though his manner is not agreeable. His capital work is LANFRANK's gallery.

JAC

JAC. FREII is an admirable engraver. He unites, in a great degree, ſtrength, and ſoftneſs; and comes as near the force of painting, as an engraver can well do. He has given us the ſtrongeſt ideas of the works of ſeveral of the moſt eminent maſters. He preſerves the drawing, and expreſſion of his original; and often, perhaps, improves the effect. There is a richneſs too in his manner, which is very pleaſing. You ſee him in perfection, in a noble print from C. MARATTI, intitled, *In conſpectu angelorum pſallam tibi.*

R. V. AUDEN AERD copied many things from C. MARATTI, and other maſters, in a ſtyle indeed very inferior to JAC. FREII, (whoſe rich execution he could not reach,) but yet with ſome elegance. His manner is ſmooth, and finiſhed; but without effect. His drawing is good, but his lights are frittered.

S. GRIBELIN is a careful, and laborious engraver; of no extenſive genius; but painfully

fully exact. His works are chiefly ſmall; the principal of which are his copies from the Banqueting-Houſe at Whitehall; and from the Cartoons. His manner is formal; yet he has contrived to preſerve the ſpirit of his original. I know no copies of the Cartoons ſo valuable as his. It is a pity he had not engraved them on a larger ſcale.

Le Bas etches in a clear, diſtinct, free manner; and has done great honour to the works of Teniers, Woverman, and Berghem; from whom he chiefly copied. The beſt of his works are after Berghem.

Bischop's etching has ſomething very pleaſing in it. It is looſe, and free; and yet has ſtrength, and richneſs. Many of his ſtatues are good figures: the drawing is ſometimes incorrect; but the execution is always beautiful. Many of the plates of his drawing-book are good. His greateſt ſingle work, is the repreſentation of Joseph *in Egypt;* in which there are many faults, both in the drawing and effect; ſome of which are chargeable on himſelf, and others on the artiſt from

whom he copied; but on the whole, it is a pleaſing print.

FRANCIS PERRIER was the debauched ſon of a goldſmith in Franchecomté. His indiſcretion forcing him from home, his inclination led him to Italy. His manner of travelling thither was whimſical. He joined himſelf to a blind beggar, whom he agreed to lead for half his alms. At Rome, he applied to painting; and made a much greater proficiency than could have been expected from his diſſipated life. He publiſhed a large collection of ſtatues and other antiquities; which are etched in a maſterly manner. The drawing is often incorrect; but the attitudes are well choſen, and the execution ſpirited. Many of them ſeem to have been done haſtily; but there are marks of genius in them all.

MAROT, architect to K. WILLIAM, hath etched ſome ſtatues likewiſe, in a maſterly manner. Indeed all his works are well executed; but they conſiſt chiefly of ornaments in the way of his profeſſion.

FRAN. ROETTIERS etches in a very bold manner, and with ſpirit; but there is a harſhneſs in his outline, which is diſagreeable; though the leſs ſo, as his drawing is generally good. Few artiſts manage a crowd better; or give it more effect by a proper diſtribution of light. Of this management we have ſome judicious inſtances in his two capital prints, the *Aſſumption of the croſs*, and the *Crucifixion*.

NICHOLAS DORIGNY was bred a lawyer: but not ſucceeding at the bar, he ſtudied painting; and afterwards applied to engraving. His capital work is, the *Transfiguration;* which Mr. ADDISON calls the nobleſt print in the world. It is unqueſtionably a noble work; but DORIGNY ſeems to have exhauſted his genius upon it: for he did nothing afterwards worth preſerving. His Cartoons are very poor. He engraved them in his old age; and was obliged to employ aſſiſtants, who did not anſwer his expectation.

Masters in Portrait.

Among the maſters in portrait, Rembrandt takes the lead. His heads are admirable copies from nature; and perhaps the beſt of his works. There is great expreſſion in them, and character.

Van Uliet followed Rembrandt's manner; which he hath in many things excelled. Some of his heads are exceedingly beautiful. The force which he gives to every feature, the roundneſs of the muſcle, the ſpirit of the execution, the ſtrength of the character, and the effect of the whole, are admirable.

J. Lievens etches in the ſame ſtyle. His heads are executed with great ſpirit; and deſerve

ſerve a place in any collection of prints; though they are certainly inferior to ULIET's.—ULIET, and LIEVENS etched ſome hiſtorical prints; particularly the latter, (whoſe *Lazarus*, after REMBRANDT, is a noble work), but their portraits are their beſt prints.

Among the imitators of REMBRANDT, we ſhould not forget our countryman WORLIDGE; who has very ingeniouſly followed the manner of that maſter; and ſometimes improved upon him. No man underſtood the drawing of a head better.—His ſmall prints alſo, from antique gems, are neat, and maſterly.

Many of VAN DYKE's etchings do him great credit. They are chiefly to be found in a collection of the portraits of eminent artiſts, which VAN DYKE was at the expence of getting engraved. They are done ſlightly; but bear the character of a maſter. LUKE VOSTERMAN is one of the beſt. It is probable VAN DYKE made the drawings for moſt of them: his manner is conſpicuous in them all.

 —A very

——A very finiſhed etching of an *Ecce homo*, paſſes under the name of this maſter. It is a good print, but not equal to what we might have expected from VAN DYKE.

We have a few prints of Sir PETER LELY's etching likewiſe; but there is nothing in them that is very intereſting.

R. WHITE was the principal engraver of portraits, in CHARLES the Second's reign; but his works are miſerable performances. They are ſaid to be good likeneſſes; and they may be ſo; but they are wretched prints.

BECKET and SIMONS are names which ſcarce deſerve to be mentioned. They were in their time, mezzotinto-ſcrapers of note, only becauſe there were no others.

WHITE, the mezzotinto-ſcraper, ſon of the engraver, was an artiſt of great merit. He copied

copied after Sir GODFREY KNELLER; whom he teaſed ſo much with his proofs, that it is ſaid Sir GODFREY forbad him his houſe. His mezzotintos are very beautiful. BAPTISTE, WING, STURGES, and HOOPER are all admirable prints. He himſelf uſed to ſay, that old and young PARR were the beſt portraits he ever ſcraped. His manner was peculiar, at the time he uſed it: though it hath ſince been adopted by other maſters. He firſt etched his plate, and then ſcraped it. Hence his prints preſerve their ſpirit longer than the generality of mezzotintos.

SMITH was the pupil of BECKET; but he ſoon excelled his maſter. He was eſteemed the beſt mezzotinto-ſcraper of his time; though, perhaps, inferior to WHITE. He hath left a very numerous collection of portraits: ſo numerous, that they are often bound in two large folios. He copied chiefly from Sir GODFREY; and is ſaid to have had an apartment in his houſe.—LORD SOMERS was ſo fond of the works of this maſter; that he ſeldom travelled, without carrying them with him in the ſeat

of his coach.—Some of his beſt prints are two holy families, ANTHONY LEIGH, MARY MAGDALENE, SCALKEN, a half-length of Lady ELIZABETH CROMWELL, the duke of SCHOMBERG on horſe-back, the counteſs of SALISBURY, GIBBON the ſtatuary, and a very fine hawking piece from WYKE.—— After all, it muſt be owned, that the beſt of theſe mezzotintos are inferior to what we have ſeen executed by the maſters of the preſent age.

MELLAN's portraits are the moſt indifferent of his works. They want ſtrength, ſpirit, and effect.

PITTERI hath lately publiſhed a ſet of heads, from PIAZZETA, in the ſtyle of MELLAN; but in a much finer taſte, with regard both to compoſition, and manner. Though, like MELLAN, he never croſſes his ſtroke; yet he has contrived to give his heads more force and ſpirit.

J. MORIN's

J. MORIN's heads are engraved in a very peculiar manner. They are ſtippled with a graver, after the manner of mezzotinto; and have a good effect. They have force; and, at the ſame time, ſoftneſs. Few portraits, on the whole, are better. GUIDO BENTIVOLIUS from VAN DYKE is one of the beſt.

J. LUTMA's heads are executed in the ſame way: we are told, with a chiſel and mallet. They are inferior to Morin's; but are not without merit.

EDM. MARMION etched a few portraits in the manner of VAN DYKE, and probably from him; in which there is eaſe and freedom. He has put his name only to one of them.

WOLFANG, a German engraver, managed his tools with ſoftneſs, and delicacy; at the ſame time preſerving a conſiderable degree of ſpirit.

ſpirit. But his works are ſcarce. I make theſe remarks indeed, from a ſingle head, that of HUET, biſhop of Auranches; which is the only work of his, that I have ſeen.

DREVET's portraits are neat, and elegant; but laboured to the laſt degree. They are copied from RIGAUD, and other French maſters; and abound in all that flutter, and licentious drapery, ſo oppoſite to the ſimple and chaſte ideas of true taſte. DREVET excels chiefly in copying RIGAUD's frippery; lace, ſilk, fur, velvet, and other ornamental parts of dreſs.

RICHARDSON hath left us ſeveral heads, which he etched for Mr. POPE, and others of his friends. They are ſlight, but ſhew the ſpirit of a maſter. Mr. POPE's profile is the beſt.

VERTUE was a good antiquarian, and a worthy man, but no artiſt. He copied with painful

painful exactneſs; in a dry, diſagreeable manner, without force, or freedom. In his whole collection of heads, we can ſcarce pick out half a dozen, which are good.

Such an artiſt in mezzotinto, was FABER. He has publiſhed nothing extremely bad; and yet nothing worth collecting. *Mrs.* COLLIER is one of his beſt prints; and has ſome merit. She is leaning againſt a pillar; on the baſe of which is engraved the ſtory of the golden apple.

HOUBRAKEN is a genius; and has given us, in his collection of Engliſh portraits, ſome pieces of engraving at leaſt equal to any thing of the kind. Such are his heads of HAMBDEN, SCHOMBERG, the earl of BEDFORD, the duke of RICHMOND particularly, and ſome others. At the ſame time we muſt own, that he has intermixed among his works, a great number of bad prints. In his beſt, there is a wonderful union of ſoftneſs, and freedom. A more elegant and flowing line no artiſt ever employed.

Our

Our countryman FRY has left behind him a few very beautiful heads in mezzotinto. They are all copied from nature; have great ſoftneſs, and ſpirit; but want ſtrength. Mezzotinto is not adapted to works ſo large, as the heads he has publiſhed.

Masters in Animal Life.

Berghem has a genius truly paſtoral; and brings before us the moſt agreeable ſcenes of rural life. The ſimplicity of Arcadian manners is no where better deſcribed than in his works. We have a large collection of prints from his deſigns; many etched by himſelf, and many by other maſters. Thoſe by himſelf are ſlight, but maſterly. His execution is inimitable. His cattle, which are always the diſtinguiſhed part of his pieces, are well drawn, admirably characterized, and generally well grouped. Few painters excelled more in compoſition than Berghem; and yet we have more beautiful inſtances of it in the prints etched from him by others, than in thoſe by himſelf. Among his own etchings a few ſmall plates of ſheep and goats are exceedingly valued.

J. Visscher

J. VISSCHER never appears to more advantage than when he copies BERGHEM. His excellent drawing, and the freedom of his execution, give a great value to his prints; which have more the air of originals, than of copies. He is a maſter both in etching, and engraving. His ſlighteſt etchings, though copies only, are the works of a maſter; and when he touches with a graver, he knows how to add ſtrength and firmneſs, without deſtroying freedom and ſpirit. He might be ſaid to have done all things well, if he had not failed in the diſtribution of light: it is more than probable, he has not attended to the effect of it, in many of the paintings which he has copied.

DANKER DANKERTS is another excellent copyiſt from BERGHEM. Every thing, that has been ſaid of VISSCHER, may be ſaid of him; and perhaps ſtill in a ſtronger manner. —Like VISSCHER too he fails in the management of his lights.

HONDIUS,

HONDIUS, a native of Rotterdam, paſſed the greater part of his life in England. He painted animals chiefly; was free in his manner; extravagant in his colouring; incorrect in his drawing; ignorant of the effect of light; but great in expreſſion. His prints therefore are better than his pictures. They poſſeſs his chief excellency, with fewer of his defects. They are executed in a neat ſtroke; but with great ſpirit; and afford ſtrong inſtances of animal fury. His *hunted wolf* is an admirable print.

DU JARDIN underſtood the anatomy of domeſtic animals perhaps better than any other maſter. His drawing is correct; and yet the freedom of the maſter is preſerved. He copied nature ſtrictly, though not ſervilely: and has given us not only the form, but the characteriſtic peculiarities, of each animal. He never, indeed, like HONDIUS, animates his creation with the violence of ſavage fury. His genius takes a milder turn. All is quietneſs, and repoſe. His dogs, after their exerciſe,

are ſtretched at their eaſe; and the languor of a meridian ſun prevails commonly through all his pieces. His compoſition is beautiful; and his execution, though neat, is ſpirited.——His works, when bound together, make a volume of about fifty leaves; among which there is ſcarce one bad print.

RUBENS's huntings are undoubtedly ſuperior on the whole, to any thing of the kind we have. There is more invention in them, and a grander ſtyle of compoſition, than we find any where elſe. I claſs them under his name; becauſe they are engraved by *ſeveral* maſters. But all their engravings are poor. They repreſent the paintings they are copied from, as a ſhadow does the object which projects it: There is ſomething of the *ſhape;* but all the *finiſhing* is loſt. And there is no doubt, but the awkwardneſſes, the patch-work, and the groteſque characters, which every where appear in theſe prints, are in the originals bold fore-ſhortnings, grand effects of light, and noble inſtances of expreſſion.—But it is as difficult to copy the flights of RUBENS, as to tranſlate

tranſlate thoſe of PINDAR. The ſpirit of each maſter evaporates in the proceſs.

WOVERMAN'S compoſition is generally crouded with little ornaments. There is no ſimplicity in his works. He wanted a chaſte judgment to correct his exuberance.—VISSCHER was the firſt who engraved prints from this artiſt. He choſe only a few good deſigns; and executed them maſterly.—MOYREAU undertook him next, and hath publiſhed a large collection. He hath finiſhed them highly; but with more ſoftneſs than ſpirit. His prints however have a neat appearance, and exhibit a variety of pleaſing repreſentations; cavalcades, marches, huntings, and encampments.

ROSA of TIVOLI etched in a very finiſhed manner. No one out-did him in compoſition and execution: he is very ſkilful too in the management of light. His deſigns are all paſtoral; and yet there is often a mixture of the heroic ſtyle in his compoſition, which is very pleaſing. His prints are ſcarce; and, were they not ſo, would be valuable.

STEPHEN DE LA BELLA may be mentioned among the maſters in animal life; though few of his works in this way deſerve any other praiſe, than what ariſes from the elegance of the execution. In general, his animals are neither well drawn, nor juſtly characterized. The beſt of his works in animal life are ſome heads of camels and dromedaries.

ANTHONY TEMPESTA hath etched ſeveral plates of ſingle horſes, and of huntings. He hath given great expreſſion to his animals; but his compoſition is more than ordinarily bad in theſe prints: nor is there in any of them the leaſt effect of light.

J. FYT hath etched a few animals; in which we diſcover the drawing, and ſomething of that ſtrength and ſpirit, with which he painted. But I never ſaw more than two or three of his prints.

In curious collections we meet with a few of CUYP's etchings. The *pictures* of this maſter excel in colouring, compoſition, drawing, and the expreſſion of character. His *prints* have all theſe excellences, except the firſt.

PETER DE LAER hath left us ſeveral ſmall etchings of horſes, and other animals, well characterized, and executed in a bold and maſterly manner. Some of them are ſingle figures; but when he compoſes, his compoſition is generally good, and his diſtribution of light ſeldom much amiſs; often pleaſing: his drawing too is commonly good.

PETER STOOP came from Liſbon with queen CATHARINE; and was admired in England, till WYCK's ſuperior excellence in painting eclipſed him. He hath etched a book of horſes, which are much valued; as there is in general, accuracy in the drawing, nature in the characters, and ſpirit in the execution.

REMBRANDT'S lions, which are etched in his uſual ſtyle, are worthy the notice of a connoiſſeur.

BLOTELING'S lions are highly finiſhed; but with more neatneſs than ſpirit.

PAUL POTTER etched ſeveral plates of cows and horſes in a maſterly manner. His manner, indeed, is better than his drawing; which, in his ſheep eſpecially, is but very indifferent: neither does he characterize them with any accuracy.

BARLOW'S etchings are numerous. His illuſtration of Æſop is his greateſt work. There is ſomething pleaſing in the compoſition and manner of this maſter, though neither is excellent. His drawing too is very indifferent; nor does he characterize any animal juſtly. His birds in general are better than his beaſts.

FLAMEN has etched ſeveral plates of birds and fiſhes: the former are bad; the latter better than any thing of the kind we have.

I ſhall cloſe this account with RIDINGER, who is one of the greateſt maſters in animal life. This artiſt has marked the characters of animals, eſpecially of the more ſavage kind, with great expreſſion. His works may be conſidered as natural hiſtory. He carries us into the foreſt among bears, and tygers; and, with the exactneſs of a naturaliſt, deſcribes their forms, haunts, and manner of living——His compoſition is generally beautiful; ſo that he commonly produces an agreeable whole. His landſcape too is pictureſque and romantic; and well adapted to the ſubject he treats.—On the other hand, his manner is laboured, and wants freedom. His human figures are ſeldom drawn with taſte. His horſes are ill-characterized, and worſe drawn; and, indeed, his drawing, in general, is but ſlovenly.—The prints of this maſter are often real hiſtory; and repreſent the portraits

traits of particular animals, which had been taken in hunting. We have ſometimes, too, the ſtory of the chace in High-Dutch, at the bottom of the print. The idea of hiſtorical truth adds a reliſh to the entertainment; and we ſurvey the animal with new pleaſure, which has given diverſion to a German prince for nine hours together.——The productions of RIDINGER are very numerous; and the greater part of them good. His huntings in general, and different methods of catching animals, are the leaſt pictureſque of his works. But he meant them rather as didactic prints, than as pictures. Many of his fables are beautiful; particularly the 3d, the 7th, the 8th, and the 10th. I cannot forbear adding a particular encomium, on a book of the heads of wolves and foxes.—His moſt capital prints are two large uprights; one repreſenting bears devouring a deer; the other, wild-boars repoſing in a foreſt.

Masters in Landscape.

Sadler's landſcapes have ſome merit in compoſition: they are pictureſque and romantic; but the manner is dry and diſagreeable; the light ill-diſtributed; the diſtances ill-kept; and the figures bad.—There were three engravers of this name; but none of them eminent. John engraved a ſet of plates for the Bible; and many other ſmall prints in the hiſtorical way: in which we ſometimes find a graceful figure, and tolerable drawing; but, on the whole, no great merit. Egidius was the engraver of landſcape; and is the perſon here criticiſed. Ralph chiefly copied the deſigns of Bassan; and engraved in the dry diſagreeable manner of his brother.

REMBRANDT's landſcapes have very little to recommend them, beſides their effect; which is often ſurpriſing. One of the moſt admired of them goes under the name of *The Three Trees.*

GASPER POUSSIN etched a few landſcapes in a very looſe, but maſterly manner. It is a pity we have not more of his works.

ABRAHAM BLOEMART underſtood the beauty of compoſition, as well in landſcape, as in hiſtory. But his prints have little force, through the want of a proper diſtribution of light. Neither is there much freedom in the execution.

HOLLAR was born at Prague; and brought into England by that great patron of arts, the earl of ARUNDEL, in CHARLES I's time. He was an artiſt of great merit, and in various ways: but I place him here, as his principal works

works are views of particular places; which he copied with great truth, as he found them. If we are ſatisfied with *exact repreſentation*, we have it no where better, than in HOLLAR's works. But we are not to expect pictures. His *large views* are generally bad: I might indeed ſay, all his *large works*. His ſhipping, his Epheſian matron, his Virgil, and his Juvenal, are among the worſt. Many of theſe prints he wrought, and probably wrought haſtily, for bookſellers. His ſmaller works are often good. Among theſe are many views of caſtles, which he took on the Rhine, and the Danube; and many views alſo in England. His diſtances are generally pleaſing. In his foregrounds, which he probably took exactly as he found them, he fails moſt. Among his other views is a very beautiful one of London bridge, and the parts adjacent, taken ſomewhere near Somerſet-houſe. HOLLAR has given us alſo ſeveral plates in animal life, which are good; particularly two or three ſmall plates of domeſtic fowls, wild ducks, woodcocks, and other game. Among his prints of game, there is particularly one very highly finiſhed, in which a hare is repreſented hanging with a baſket of birds.

His

His ſhells, muffs, and butterflies, are admirable. His looſe etchings too are far from wanting ſpirit; and his imitations are excellent, particularly thoſe after count GAUDE, CALLOT, and BARLOW. He has admirably expreſſed the manner of thoſe maſters—of CALLOT eſpecially, whoſe *Beggars* have all the ſpirit of the originals, in a reduced ſize.—In general, however, HOLLAR is moſt admired as an antiquarian. We conſider his works as a repoſitory of curioſities; and records of antiquated dreſſes, aboliſhed ceremonies, and edifices now in ruins. And yet many of his antiquities are elegantly touched. The Gothic ornaments of his cathedrals are often maſterly. The ſword of EDWARD VI. the cup of ANDREA MONTEGNA, and the vaſes from HOLBEIN, are all beautiful.—I have dwelt the longer on this artiſt, as he is in general much eſteemed; and as I had an opportunity of examining two of the nobleſt collections of his works, I believe, in England—one in the King's library, collected, as I have heard, by king WILLIAM; the other in the library of the late ducheſs dowager of PORTLAND. And yet though theſe collections are ſo very numerous (each, as I remember, con-

contained in two large volumes in folio) neither of them is complete. There were ſome prints in each, which were not in the other.—Notwithſtanding HOLLAR was ſo very indefatigable, and was patronized by many people of rank, he was ſo very poor, that he died with an execution in his houſe.

STEPHEN DE LA BELLA'S landſcapes have little to recommend them, beſides their neatneſs, and keeping. His compoſition is ſeldom good; and the foliage of his trees reſembles bits of ſpunge. I ſpeak chiefly of his larger works; for which his manner is not calculated. His neatneſs qualifies him better for miniature.

BOLSWERT'S landſcapes after REUBENS are executed in a grand ſtyle. Such a painter, and ſuch an engraver, could not fail of producing ſomething great. There is little variety in them: nor any of the more minute beauties ariſing from contraſt, catching lights, and ſuch little elegances; but every thing is ſimple, and great. The print, which goes by

by the name of *The waggon*, is particularly, and deſervedly admired. Of theſe prints we generally meet with good impreſſions; as the plates are engraved with great ſtrength.

NEULANT hath etched a ſmall book of the ruins of Rome; in which there is great ſimplicity, and ſome ſkill in compoſition, and the diſtribution of light: but the execution is harſh and diſagreeable.

We have a few landſcapes by an earl of *Sunderland*, in an elegant, looſe manner. One of them, in which a Spaniard is ſtanding on the foreground, is marked *G. & J. ſculpſerunt*: another *J. G.*

WATERLO is a name beyond any other in landſcape. His ſubjects are perfectly rural. Simplicity is their characteriſtic. We find no great variety in them, nor ſtretch of fancy. He ſelects a few humble objects. A coppice, a corner of a foreſt, a winding road, or a ſtraggling village is generally the extent of his view:

view: nor does he always introduce an offſkip. His compoſition is generally good, ſo far as it goes, and his light often well diſtributed; but his chief merit lies in execution; in which he is a conſummate maſter. Every object that he touches, has the character of nature: but he particularly excels in the foliage of trees.—It is a difficult matter to meet with the larger works at leaſt, of this maſter in perfection; the original plates are all retouched, and greatly injured.

SWANEVELT painted landſcape at Rome; where he obtained the name of *the hermit*, from his ſolitary walks among the ruins of TIVOLI, and FRESCATI; among the rocky vallies of the Sabine mountains; and the beautiful wooded lakes of the Latin hills. He etched in the manner of WATERLO; but with leſs freedom. His trees, in particular, will bear no compariſon with thoſe of that maſter. But if he fell ſhort of WATERLO in the freedom of execution, he went greatly beyond him in the dignity of deſign. WATERLO ſaw nature with a Dutchman's eye. If we except two or three of his pieces, he never went beyond

beyond the plain ſimplicity of a Flemiſh landſcape. SWANEVELT'S ideas were of a nobler caſt. SWANEVELT had trodden claſſic ground; and had warmed his imagination with the grandeur and variety of Italian views, every where ornamented with the ſplendid ruins of Roman architecture: but his favourite ſubjects ſeem to have been the mountain-foreſts, where a magnificent diſpoſition of ground, and rock is embelliſhed with the nobleſt growth of foreſt-trees. His compoſition is often good; and his lights judiciouſly ſpread. In his execution, we plainly diſcover two manners: whether a number of his plates have been retouched by ſome judicious hand; or whether he himſelf altered his manner in the different periods of his life.

JAMES ROUSSEAU, the diſciple of SWANEVELT, was a French proteſtant; and fled into England from the perſecution of LEWIS XIV. Here he was patronized by the duke of MONTAGUE; whoſe palace, now the *Britiſh Muſeum*, he contributed to adorn with his paintings; ſome of which are good. The few etchings he hath left are beautiful. He underſtood

derſtood compoſition, and the diſtribution of light; and there is a fine taſte in his landſcapes; if we except perhaps only that his horizon is often taken too high. Neither can his perſpective, at all times, bear a critical examination; and what is worſe, it is often pedantically introduced. His figures are good in themſelves, and generally well placed. —His manner is rather dry and formal.— ROUSSEAU, it may be added, was an excellent man. Having eſcaped the rage of perſecution himſelf, he made it his ſtudy to leſſen the ſufferings of his diſtreſſed brethren; by diſtributing among them great part of the produce of his genius. Such an anecdote, in the life of a painter, ſhould not be omitted, even in ſo ſhort a review as this.

We now and then meet with an etching by RUYSDALE; but I never ſaw any, that was not exceedingly ſlight.

J. LUTMA hath etched a few ſmall landſcapes in a maſterly manner; which diſcover ſome

ſome ſkill in compoſition, and the manage-ment of light.

ISRAEL SYLVESTRE has given us a great variety of ſmall views (ſome indeed of a larger ſize) of ruins, churches, bridges and caſtles, in France and Italy. They are exceedingly neat, and touched with great ſpirit. This maſter can give beauty even to the outlines of a modern building; and what is more, he gives it without injuring the truth: inſomuch that I have ſeen a gentleman juſt come from his travels, pick out many of SYLVESTRE's views, one by one, (though he had never ſeen them before,) merely from his acquaintance with the buildings. To the praiſe of this maſter it may be farther added, that in general he forms his view into an agreeable whole; and if his light is not always well diſtributed, there are ſo many beauties in his execution, that the eye cannot find fault. His works are very numerous, and few of them are bad. In trees he excels leaſt.

The

The etchings of CLAUDE LORRAIN are below his character. His execution is bad; and there is a dirtineſs in it, which diſpleaſes: his trees are heavy; his lights ſeldom well-maſſed; and his diſtances only ſometimes obſerved.——The truth is, CLAUDE's talents lay upon his pallet; and he could do little without it.——His *Via ſacra* is one of his beſt prints. The trees and ruins on the left, are beautifully touched; and the whole (though rather formal) would have been pleaſing, if the foreground had been in ſhadow.——After all, it is probable, I may not have ſeen ſome of his beſt prints. I have heard a ſea-port much praiſed for the effect of a ſetting ſun; and another print, in which a large group of trees fill the centre, with water, and cattle on the foreground; and a diſtance, on each ſide of the trees. But I do not recollect ſeeing either of theſe prints.

PERELLE has great merit. His fancy is fruitful; and ſupplies him with a richneſs, and variety in his views, which nature ſeldom exhibits.

hibits. It is indeed too exuberant; for he often confounds the eye with too great a luxuriancy. His manner is his own; and it is difficult to say, whether it excels most in richness, strength, elegance, or freedom. His trees are particularly beautiful; the foliage is loose, and the ramification easy. And yet it must be confessed, that PERELLE is rather a mannerist, than a copier of nature. His views are all ideal; his trees are of one family; and his light, though generally well distributed, is sometimes affected: it is introduced as a spot; and is not properly melted into the neighbouring shade by a middle tint. Catching lights, used sparingly, are beautiful: PERELLE affects them.—These remarks are made principally on the works of *Old* PERELLE: For there were three engravers of this name; the grandfather, the father, and the son. They all engraved in the same style; but the juniors, instead of improving the family taste, degenerated. The grandfather is the best, and the grandson the worst.

VANDER CABEL seems to have been a careless artist; and discovers great slovenliness in

in many of his works: but in thoſe which he has ſtudied, and carefully executed, there is great beauty. His manner is looſe and maſterly. It wants effect; but abounds in freedom. His trees are often particularly well managed; and his ſmall pieces, in general, are the beſt of his works.

In WEIROTTER we ſee great neatneſs, and high finiſhing; but often at the expence of ſpirit and effect. He ſeems to have underſtood beſt the management of trees; to which he always gives a beautiful looſeneſs.——There is great effect in a ſmall moon-light by this maſter: the whole is in dark ſhade, except three figures on the foreground.

OVERBECK etched a book of Roman ruins: which are in general good. They are pretty large, and highly finiſhed. His manner is free, his light often well diſtributed, and his compoſition agreeable.

GENOEL's landſcapes are rather free ſketches, than finiſhed prints. In that light they are beautiful. No effect is aimed at: but the free manner in which they are touched, is pleaſing; and the compoſition is in general good, though often crowded.

BOTH's taſte in landſcape is elegant. His ideas are grand; his compoſition beautiful; and his execution rich and maſterly in a high degree. His light is not always well diſtributed. His figures are excellent. We regret that we have not more of his works; for they are certainly, on the whole, among the beſt landſcapes we have.

MARCO RICCI's works, which are numerous, have little merit. His human figures indeed are good, and his trees tolerable; but he produces no effect, his manner is diſguſting, his cattle ill-drawn, and his diſtances ill-preſerved.

LE VEAU's landſcapes are highly finiſhed: they are engraved with great ſoftneſs, elegance, and ſpirit. The keeping of this maſter is particularly well obſerved. His ſubjects too are well choſen; and his prints indeed, in general, make beautiful furniture.

ZUINGG engraves in a manner very like LE VEAU; but not quite ſo elegantly.

ZEEMAN was a Dutch painter; and excelled in ſea-coaſts, beaches, and diſtant land; which he commonly adorned with ſkiffs, and fiſhing-boats. His prints are copies from his pictures. His execution is neat, and his diſtances well kept: but he knows nothing of the diſtribution of light. His figures too are good, and his ſkiffs admirable. In his *ſea-pieces* he introduces larger veſſels; but his prints in this ſtyle are commonly awkward, and diſagreeable.

VANDIEST left behind him a few rough ſketches, which are executed with great freedom.

GOUPY very happily caught the manner of SALVATOR; and in ſome things excelled him. There is a richneſs in his execution, and a ſpirit in his trees, which SALVATOR wants. But his figures are bad. Very groſs inſtances, not only of indelicacy of outline, but even of bad drawing, may be found in his print of PORSENNA, and in that of DIANA. Landſcape is his fort; and his beſt prints are thoſe which go under the titles of the *Latrones*, the *Augurs*, *Tobit*, *Hagar*, and its companion.

PIRANESI has given us a larger collection of Roman antiquities, than any other maſter; and has added to his ruins a great variety of modern buildings. The critics ſay, he has truſted too much to his eye; and that his proportions and perſpective are often faulty. He ſeems to be a rapid genius; and we are told,

told, the drawings, which he takes on the ſpot, are as ſlight and rough as poſſible: the reſt he makes out by memory and invention. His invention indeed is wonderful; and I know not whether ſuch of his works as are entirely of his own invention are not the beſt. From ſo rapid, and voluminous an artiſt, indeed we cannot expect much correctneſs: his works complete, ſell at leaſt for fifty pounds.——But the great excellence of this artiſt lies in execution; of which he is a conſummate maſter. His ſtroke is firm, free, and bold, in the greateſt degree; and his manner admirably calculated to produce a grand, and rich effect. But the effects he produces are rarely ſeen, except in ſingle objects. A defaced capital, a ruined wall, or broken fluting, he touches with great ſpirit. He expreſſes even the ſtains of weather-beaten marble: and thoſe of his prints, in which he has an opportunity of diſplaying expreſſion in this way, are generally the beſt. His ſtroke has much the appearance of etching; but I have been informed that it is chiefly engraved, and that he makes great uſe of the dry needle.—His faults are many. His horizon is often taken too high; his views are frequently ill-choſen; his objects crowded; his forms ill-ſhaped. Of the diſtribution of light he

has little knowledge. Now and then we meet with an effect of it; which makes us only lament, that in ſuch maſterly performances it is found ſo ſeldom. His figures are bad: they are ill-drawn, and the drapery hangs in tatters. It is the more unhappy, as his prints are populous. His trees are in a paltry ſtyle; and his ſkies hard, and frittered.

Our celebrated countryman HOGARTH cannot properly be omitted in a catalogue of engravers; and yet he ranks in none of the foregoing claſſes. With this apology I ſhall introduce him here.

The works of this maſter abound in true humour; and ſatire, which is generally well directed. They are admirable moral leſſons, and afford a fund of entertainment ſuited to every taſte: a circumſtance, which ſhews them to be juſt copies of nature. We may conſider them too as valuable repoſitories of the manners, cuſtoms, and dreſſes of the preſent age. What amuſement would a collection of this kind afford, drawn from every period of the hiſtory of Britain?—How far the works of HOGARTH will bear a *critical examination*, may be the ſubject of a little more inquiry.

In

In *deſign* HOGARTH was ſeldom at a loſs. His invention was fertile; and his judgment accurate. An improper incident is rarely introduced; a proper one rarely omitted. No one could tell a ſtory better; or make it, in all its circumſtances, more intelligible. His genius, however, it muſt be owned, was ſuited only to *low*, or *familiar* ſubjects. It never ſoared above *common* life: to ſubjects naturally ſublime; or which from antiquity, or other accidents borrowed dignity, he could not riſe.

In *compoſition* we ſee little in him to admire. In many of his prints, the deficiency is ſo great, as plainly to imply a want of all principle; which makes us ready to believe, that when we do meet with a beautiful group, it is the effect of chance. In one of his minor works, the *idle 'prentice*, we ſeldom ſee a crowd more beautifully managed, than in the laſt print. If the ſheriff's officers had not been placed in a line, and had been brought a little lower in the picture, ſo as to have formed a pyramid with the cart, the compoſition had been unexceptionable; and yet the firſt print of this work is ſo ſtriking an inſtance of diſagreeable compoſition, that it is amazing, how an artiſt, who had any idea of beautiful forms,

forms, could ſuffer ſo unmaſterly a performance to leave his hands.

Of the *diſtribution of light* HOGARTH had as little knowledge as of *compoſition*. In ſome of his pieces we ſee a good effect; as in the *execution* juſt mentioned: in which, if the figures at the right and left corners, had been *kept down* a little, the light would have been beautifully diſtributed on the foreground, and a fine ſecondary light ſpread over part of the crowd: but at the ſame time there is ſo obvious a deficiency in point of effect, in moſt of his prints, that it is very evident he had no principles.

Neither was HOGARTH a maſter of *drawing*. Of the muſcles and anatomy of the head and hands he had perfect knowledge; but his trunks are often badly moulded, and his limbs ill ſet on. I tax him with plain bad drawing; I ſpeak not of the niceties of anatomy, and elegance of out-line: of theſe indeed he knew nothing; nor were they of uſe in that mode of deſign which he cultivated: and yet his figures, on the whole, are inſpired with ſo much life, and meaning; that the eye is kept in good humour, in ſpite of its inclination to find fault.

The

The author of the *Analyſis of Beauty*, it might be ſuppoſed, would have given us more inſtances of *grace*, than we find in the works of HOGARTH; which ſhews ſtrongly that theory and practice are not always united. Many opportunities his ſubjects naturally afford of introducing graceful attitudes; and yet we have very few examples of them. With inſtances of *pictureſque grace* his works abound.

Of his *expreſſion*, in which the force of his genius lay, we cannot ſpeak in terms too high. In every mode of it he was truly excellent. The paſſions he thoroughly underſtood; and all the effects which they produce in every part of the human frame: he had the happy art alſo of conveying his ideas with the ſame preciſion, with which he conceived them.—He was excellent too in expreſſing any humorous oddity, which we often ſee ſtamped upon the human face. All his heads are caſt in the very mould of nature. Hence that endleſs variety, which is diſplayed through his works: and hence it is, that the difference ariſes between *his* heads, and the affected caricatures of *thoſe* maſters, who have ſometimes amuſed themſelves with patching together an aſſemblage of features from their own ideas.

Such

Such are SPANIOLET's; which, though admirably executed, appear plainly to have no archetypes in nature. HOGARTH's, on the other hand, are collections of natural curiosities. The *Oxford-heads*, the *physician's-arms*, and some of his other pieces, are expressly of this humorous kind. They are truly comic; though ill-natured effusions of mirth: more entertaining than SPANIOLET's, as they are pure nature; but less innocent, as they contain ill-directed ridicule.—But the species of expression, in which this master perhaps most excels, is that happy art of catching those peculiarities of air, and gesture, which the ridiculous part of every profession contract; and which, for that reason, become characteristic of the whole. His counsellors, his undertakers, his lawyers, his usurers, are all conspicuous at sight. In a word, almost every profession may see in his works, that particular species of affectation, which they should most endeavour to avoid.

The execution of this master is well suited to his subjects, and manner of treating them. He etches with great spirit; and never gives one unnecessary stroke. For myself, I greatly more value the works of his own needle, than those

thoſe high-finiſhed prints, on which he employed other engravers. For as the production of an effect is not his talent; and as this is the chief excellence of high-finiſhing; his own rough manner is certainly preferable; in which we have moſt of the force, and ſpirit of his expreſſion. The *manner* in none of his works pleaſes me ſo well, as in a ſmall print of a corner of a play-houſe. There is more ſpirit in a work of this kind, ſtruck off at once, warm from the imagination, than in all the cold correctneſs of an elaborate engraving. If all his works had been executed in this ſtyle, with a few improvements in the compoſition, and the management of light, they would certainly have been a more valuable collection of prints than they are. The *Rake's Progreſs*, and ſome of his other works, are both etched and engraved by himſelf: they are well done; but it is plain he meant them as furniture. As works deſigned for a critic's eye, they would have been better without the engraving; except a *few* touches in a *very few* places. The want of effect too would have been leſs conſpicuous, which in his higheſt finiſhed prints is diſagreeably ſtriking.

CHAP. IV.

Remarks on particular Prints.

HAVING thus examined the characters of ſeveral maſters, I ſhall now make a few remarks on ſome particular prints, by way of illuſtrating the obſervations that have been made. The firſt print I ſhall criticize, is

The Resurrection of Lazarus, by Bloemart.

Wih regard to deſign, this print has great merit. The point of time is very judiciouſly choſen. It is a point between the firſt command, *Lazarus, come forth;* and the ſecond, *Looſe him, and let him go.* The aſtoniſhment of the two ſiſters is now over. The predominant paſſion is gratitude; which is diſcovering itſelf in praiſe. One of the attendants is telling

the ſtupified man, " That is your ſiſter." Himſelf, collecting his ſcattered ideas, directs his gratitude to Chriſt. Jeſus directs it to heaven. So far the deſign is good. But what are thoſe idle figures on the right hand, and on the left? Some of them ſeem no way concerned in the action. Two of the principal are introduced as grave-diggers; but even in that capacity they were unwanted; for *the place*, we are told, *was a cave, and a ſtone lay upon it.* When a painter is employed on a barren ſubject, he muſt make up his groups as he is able; but there was no barrenneſs here: the artiſt might, with propriety, have introduced, in the room of the grave-diggers, ſome of the Phariſaical party maligning the action. Such, we are told, were on the ſpot; and, as they are figures of conſequence in the ſtory, they ought not to have been ſhoved back, as they are, among the appendages of the piece.

The *compoſition* is almoſt faultleſs. The principal group is finely diſpoſed. It opens in a beautiful manner, and diſcovers every part. It is equally beautiful, when conſidered in combination with the figures on the left hand.

The *light* is but ill-diſtributed, though the figures are diſpoſed to receive the moſt beauitful effect

effect of it. The whole is one glare. It had been better, if all the figures on the elevated ground, on the right, had been in ſtrong ſhadow. The extended arm, the head and ſhoulder of the grave-digger, might have received catching lights. A little more light might have been thrown on the principal figure; and a little leſs on the figure kneeling. The remaining figures, on the left, ſhould have been *kept down.* Thus the light would have centered ſtrongly on the capital group, and would have faded gradually away.

The ſingle figures are in general good. The principal one indeed is not ſo capital as might be wiſhed. The character is not quite pleaſing; the right arm is awkwardly introduced, if not ill-drawn; and the whole diſagreeably incumbered with drapery.—Lazarus is very fine: the drawing, the expreſſion, and grace of the figure are all good.—The figure kneeling contraſts with the group.—The grave-diggers are both admirable. It is a pity, they ſhould be incumbrances only.

The *drawing* is in general good: yet there ſeems to be ſomething amiſs in the pectoral muſcles of the grave-digger on the right. The hands too of almoſt all the figures are con-

ſtrained and awkward. Few of them are in natural action.

The *manner*, which is mere engraving, without any etching, is ſtrong, diſtinct, and expreſſive.

The death of Polycrates; by Salvator Rosa.

The *ſtory* is well told: every part is fully engaged in the ſubject, and properly ſubordinate to it.

The *diſpoſition* is agreeable. The contrivance of the groups, falling one into another, is pleaſing: and yet the form would have been more beautiful, if a ladder with a figure upon it, a piece of looſe drapery, a ſtandard, or ſome other object, had been placed on the left ſide of the croſs, to have filled up that formal vacancy, in the ſhape of a right-angle, and to have made the pyramid more complete. The groups themſelves are ſimple and elegant. The three figures on horſe-back indeed are bad. A line of heads is always unpleaſing.

There is little idea of *keeping*. The whole is too much one ſurface; which might have been prevented by more force on the fore-ground, and a ſlighter ſky.

The *light* is diſtributed without any judgment. It might perhaps have been improved, if the group of the ſoldier reſting on his ſhield, had been in ſhadow; with a few catching lights. This ſhadow, paſſing through the label, might have extended over great part of the foreground above it; by which we ſhould have had a body of ſhadow to balance the light of the centre-group. The lower figures of the equeſtrian-group might have received a middle tint, with a few ſtrong touches; the upper figures might have caught the light, to detach them from the ground.—There are ſome lights too in the ſky, which would be better removed.

With regard to the figures taken ſeparately, they are almoſt unexceptionably good. We ſeldom indeed ſee ſo many good figures in any collection of ſuch a number. The young ſoldier leaning over his ſhield; the other figures of that group; the ſoldier pointing, in the middle of the picture; and the figure behind him ſpreading his hands, are all in the higheſt degree elegant, and graceful. The diſtant figures too are beautiful. The expreſſion, in the whole body of the ſpectators, is ſtriking. Some are more, and ſome leſs affected; but

every

every one in a degree.——All the figures, however, are not faultleſs. POLYCRATES hangs ungracefully on his croſs: his body is compoſed of parallel lines, and right angles. His face is ſtrongly marked with agony: but his legs are diſproportioned to his body.—The three lower figures of the equeſtrian-group have little beauty.——One of the equeſtrian figures alſo, that neareſt the croſs, is formal and diſpleaſing: and as to a horſe, SALVATOR ſeems to have had very little idea of the proportion and anatomy of that animal.—Indeed the *whole* of this corner of the print is bad; and I know not whether the compoſition would not be improved by the removal of it.

The ſcenery is beautiful. The rock broken, and covered with ſhrubs at the top; and afterwards ſpreading into one grand, and ſimple ſhade, is in itſelf a pleaſing object; and affords an excellent back-ground to the figures.

The *execution* of this print is equal to that of any of SALVATOR's works.

The triumph of Silenus; by Peter Testa.

P. Testa ſeems, in this elegant and maſterly performance, as far as his ſublime ideas can be comprehended, to have intended a ſatire on the indulgence of inordinate deſires.

The *deſign* is perfect. Silenus repreſenting drunkenneſs, is introduced in the middle of the piece, holding an ivy-crown, and ſupported by his train, in all the pomp of unwieldy majeſty. Before him dance a band of bacchanalian rioters; ſome of them, as deſcribed by the poets,

——— inter pocula læti,
Mollibus in pratis, *unctos ſaliere per utres.*

Intemperance, Debauchery, and unnatural Luſts complete the immoral feſtival. In the offskip riſes the temple of Priapus; and hard-by a mountain, dedicated to lewdneſs, nymphs, and ſatyrs.—In the heavens are repreſented the

Moon

Moon and *Stars* puſhing back the *Sun*. This group is introduced in various attitudes of ſurprize, and fear. The Moon is hiding her face; and one of her companions, extinguiſhing a torch—all implying, that ſuch revels, as are here deſcribed, dreaded the approach of day.

The *diſpoſition* has leſs merit; yet is not unpleaſing. The group, on the left, and the *ſeveral parts* of it, are happily diſpoſed. The group of dancers, on the other ſide, is crowded, and ill-ſhaped. The diſpoſition might, perhaps, have had a better effect, if an elegant canopy had been held over SILENUS; which would have been no improper appendage; and, by forming the apex of a pyramid over the principal figure, would have given more variety and beauty to the whole.

The *light*, with regard to *particular figures*, is juſt, and beautiful. But ſuch a light, at beſt, gives us only the idea of a picture examined by a candle. Every figure, as you hold the candle to it, appears well lighted; but inſtead of an *effect* of light, you have only a ſucceſſion of *ſpots*. Indeed the light is not only ill, but abſurdly diſtributed. The upper part is enlightened by one ſun, and the lower part by another; the direction of the light

being different in each.—Should we endeavour to amend it, it might be better perhaps to leave out the Sun; and to repreſent him, by his ſymbols, as *approaching* only. The ſky-figures would of courſe receive catching lights, and might be left nearly as they are. The figure of *Rain* under the *Moon* ſhould be in ſhadow. The bear too, and the lion's head ſhould be *kept down*. Thus there would be nothing glaring in the celeſtial figures. SILENUS, and his train, might be enlightened by a ſtrong torch-light, carried by the dancing figures. The light would then fall nearly as it does, on the principal group. The other figures ſhould be *brought down* to a middle tint. This kind of light would naturally produce a gloom in the background, which would have a good effect.

With regard to the figures taken ſeparately, they are conceived with ſuch claſſical purity, and ſimplicity of taſte; ſo elegant in the drawing, and ſo graceful in every attitude; that if I were obliged to fix upon any print, as an example of all the beauties which ſingle figures are capable of receiving, I ſhould almoſt be tempted to give the preference to this.

The

The moſt ſtriking inſtances of fine *drawing* are ſeen in the principal figure; in the legs of the figure that ſupports him; and in thoſe of the figure dancing with the pipes; in the man and woman behind the centaur; in the figure in the clouds, with his right hand over his knee; and particularly in that bold fore-ſhortened figure on the right of the Sun.

Inſtances of *expreſſion* we have in the unwieldineſs of SILENUS. He appears ſo dead a weight, ſo totally unelaſtic, that every part of him, which is not ſupported, ſinks with its own gravity. The ſenſibility too with which his bloated body, like a quagmire, feels every touch, is ſtrongly expreſſed in his countenance. The figure, which ſupports him, expreſſes ſtrongly the labour of the action. The dancing figures are all well characterized. The puſhing figures alſo in the ſky are marked with great expreſſion; and above all the threatening figure, repreſented in the act of drawing a bow.

With regard to *grace*, every figure, at leaſt every capital one, is agreeable; if we except only that figure, which lies kicking its legs upon the ground. But we have the ſtrongeſt inſtances of grace in the figure dancing with

the pipes; in the man and woman behind the centaur, (who, it is not improbable, might be deſigned for BACCHUS and ARIADNE;) and in the boy lying on the ground.

With regard to *execution*, we rarely ſee an inſtance of it in greater perfection. Every head, every muſcle, and every extremity is touched with infinite ſpirit. The very appendages are fine; and the ſtone-pines, which adorn the background, are marked with ſuch taſte and preciſion, as if landſcape had been this artiſt's only ſtudy.

SMITH'S PORTRAIT OF THE DUKE OF SCHOMBERG; FROM KNELLER.

KNELLER, even when he laid himſelf out to excel, was often but a tawdry painter. His equeſtrian portrait of king WILLIAM, at Hampton-court, is a very unmaſterly performance: the compoſition is bad; the colouring gaudy; the whole is void of effect, and there is ſcarce a good figure in the piece.—The compoſition before us is more pleaſing, though the effect is little better. An equeſtrian figure, at beſt, is an awkward ſubject. The legs of a horſe are great incumbrances in grouping. VANDYKE, indeed, has managed king CHARLES the Firſt, on horſeback, with great judgment: and RUBENS too, at Hampton-court, has made a noble picture of the duke of ALVA; though his horſe is ill drawn.——In the print before us the figure ſits with grace and dignity; but the horſe is no Bucephalus: his character is only

that

that of a managed pad. The bush, growing by the duke's truncheon, is a trifling circumstance; and helps to break, into more parts, a composition already too much broken.——The *execution* is throughout excellent; and though the parts are rather too small for mezzotinto, yet SMITH has given them all their force.

PETHER'S MEZZOTINTO OF REMBRANDT'S JEWISH RABBI.

The character is that of a ſtern, haughty man, big with the idea of his own importance. The *rabbi* is probably fictitious; but the *character* was certainly taken from nature. There is great dignity in it; which in a work of REMBRANDT's is the more extraordinary.——The full expreſſion of it is given us in the print. The unelaſtic heavineſs of age, which is ſo well deſcribed in the original, is as well preſerved in the copy. The three equidiſtant lights on the head, on the ornament, and on the hands, are diſagreeable: in the print they could not be removed; but it might have been judicious to have *kept down* the two latter a little more.——With regard to the execution, every part is ſcraped with the utmoſt ſoftneſs, and delicacy. The muſcles are round and plump; and the inſertions of them, which in an old face are very apparent, are well expreſſed.

preſſed. Such a variety of middle tints, and melting lights, were difficult to manage; and yet they are managed with great tenderneſs. The looſeneſs of the beard is maſterly. The hands are exactly thoſe of a fat old man. The ſtern eyes are full of life; and the noſe and mouth are admirably touched. The ſeparation of the lips in ſome parts, and the adheſion of them in others, are characteriſtic ſtrokes; and happily preſerved. The folds and lightneſs of the turban are very elegant. The robe, about the ſhoulder, is unintelligible, and ill managed: but this was the painter's fault.——In a word, when we examine this very beautiful mezzotinto, we muſt acknowledge, that no engraving can equal it in ſoftneſs, and delicacy.

HONDIUS'S HUNTED WOLF.

The compoſition, in this little print, is good; and yet there is too much ſimilitude, in the direction of the bodies of the ſeveral animals. The group alſo is too much broken, and wants ſolidity. The horizon is taken too high; unleſs the dimenſions of the print had been higher. The riſing ground, above the wolf's head, had been offskip enough: and yet the rock, which riſes higher, is ſo beautifully touched; that it would be a pity to remove it.——The *light* is diſtributed without any judgment. It might have been improved, if all the interſtices among the legs, and heads of the animals, had been *kept down;* and the ſhadow made very ſtrong under the fawn, and the wounded dog. This would have given a bold relief to the figures; and might, without any other alteration, have produced a good effect.—The *drawing* is not faultleſs. The legs and body of the wounded dog are inaccurate: nor does the attacking dog ſtand

ſtand firm upon his right leg.—With regard to *expreſſion*, HONDIUS has exerted his full force. The expreſſion, both of the wounded dog, and of the wolf, is admirable: but the expreſſion of the attacking dog is a moſt bold and maſterly copy from nature. His attitude ſhews every nerve convulſed; and his head is a maſterpiece of animal fury.—We ſhould add, that the ſlaughtered animal is ſo ill characterized, that we ſcarce know what it is.—The *execution* is equal to the expreſſion. It is neat, and highly finiſhed; but diſcovers in every touch the ſpirit of a maſter.

THE FIFTH PLATE OF DU JARDIN'S ANIMALS.

The *deſign*, though humble, is beautiful. The two dogs repoſing at noon, after the labour of the morning, the implements of fowling, the fictitious hedge, and the loop-holes through it, all correſpond; and agreeably tell the little hiſtory of the day.——The *compoſition* alſo is good: though it might have been better, if another dog, or ſomething equivalent, had been introduced in the vacancy at the left corner. This would have given the group of dogs a better form. The nets, and fowling-pieces are judiciouſly added; and make an agreeable ſhape with the dogs. The hedge alſo adds another pyramidal form; which would have been more pleaſing if the left corner of the reeds had been a little higher.—The *light* is well diſtributed; only there is too much of it. The farther dog might have been *taken down*

a little; and the hinder parts of the nearer. ———The *drawing* and *expreſſion* are pure nature; and the *execution* elegant and maſterly.

Waterlo's Tobias.

The landſcape I mean, is an upright near twelve inches, by ten. On the near ground ſtands an oak, which forms a diagonal through the print. The ſecond diſtance is compoſed of a riſing ground, connected with a rock, which is covered with ſhrubs. The oak, and the ſhrubs make a viſta, through which appears an extenſive view into the country. The figures, which conſiſt of an angel, Tobias, and a dog, are deſcending a hill, which forms the ſecond diſtance. The print, with this deſcription, cannot be miſtaken.—The *compoſition* is very pleaſing. The trees, on the foreground, ſpreading over the top of the print, and ſloping to a point at the bottom, give the beautiful form of an inverted pyramid; which, in trees eſpecially, has often a fine effect. To this form the inclined plane, on which the figures ſtand, and which is beautifully broken, is a good contraſt. The rock approaches to a

perpendicular, and the diſtance to an horizontal line. All together make ſuch a combination of beautiful and contraſting lines, that the whole is pleaſing. If I ſhould find fault with any thing, it is the regularity of the rocks. There is no variety in parallels; and it had been very eaſy to have broken them.—The *keeping* is well preſerved. The ſecond and third diſtances are both judiciouſly managed. The *light* is well diſpoſed. To prevent heavineſs, it is introduced upon the tree, both at the top and at the bottom; but it is properly *kept down*. A maſs of ſhade ſucceeds over the ſecond diſtance; and the water. The light breaks, in a blaze, on the bottom of the rock, and maſſes the *whole*. The trees, ſhrubs, and upper part of the rock are happily thrown into a middle tint. Perhaps the effect of the diſtant country might have been better, if the light had been *kept down*; leaving only one eaſy catching light upon the town, and the riſing ground on which it ſtands.—The *execution* is exceedingly beautiful. No artiſt had a happier manner of expreſſing trees than WATERLO; and the tree before us is one of his capital works. The ſhape of it we have already criticized. The

bole

bole and ramification are as beautiful as the ſhape. The foliage is a maſterpiece. Such a union of ſtrength, and lightneſs is rarely found. The extremities are touched with great tenderneſs; the ſtrong maſſes of light are relieved with ſhadows equally ſtrong; and yet eaſe, and ſoftneſs are preſerved. The foreground is highly enriched; and indeed the whole print, and every part of it, is full of art, and full of nature.

The deluge at Coëverden, by Roman le Hooghe.

This is an hiſtorical landſcape, a ſtyle very different from that of the laſt. Waterlo had nothing in view, but to form an agreeable picture. The figures, which he introduced, unconnected with his ſubject, ſerve only to embelliſh it. But Le Hooghe was confined within narrower lines. He had a *country* to deſcribe, and a *ſtory* to tell. The *country* is the environs of Coeverden, a Dutch town, with a view of an immenſe bank, thrown up againſt the ſea. The *ſtory*, is the ruin of that bank; which was broken through in three places, by the violence of a ſtorm. The ſubject was great and difficult; and yet the artiſt has acquitted himſelf in a maſterly manner. The town of Coeverden fills the diſtant view. The country is ſpread with a deluge; the ſky with a tempeſt; and the breaches in the bank appear in all their horror.—The *compoſi-*

tion,

tion, in the diſtant and middle parts, is as pleaſing as ſuch an extenſive ſubject can be. An elevated horizon, which is always diſpleaſing, was neceſſary here to give a diſtinct view of the whole.—The *light* too is thrown over the diſtant parts in good maſſes.—The *expreſſion* of the figures, of the horſes eſpecially, is very ſtrong: thoſe, which the driver is turning, to avoid the horrid chaſm before him, are impreſſed with the wildeſt character of terror: and, indeed, the whole ſcene of diſtreſs, and the horrible confuſion in every part of it, are admirably deſcribed.—The *execution* is good, though not equal to that of many of LE HOOGHE's works. It may be added, that the ſhape of the print is bad. A little more length would have enlarged the idea; and the town would have ſtood better, not quite in the middle.——But what is moſt faulty, is the diſproportion, and littleneſs of the foreground on the right. The ſpirit, which the artiſt had maintained through the whole deſcription, ſeems here to flag. Whereas *here* he ſhould have cloſed the whole with ſome noble confuſion; which would have ſet off the diſtant parts, and ſtruck the ſpectator with the ſtrongeſt images of horror. Inſtead of this,

we are prefented with a few pigs, and calves floundering in the water. The thought feems borrowed from OVID. In the midft of a world in ruins, *Nat lupus inter oves.*

HOGARTH'S RAKE'S PROGRESS.

The firſt print of this capital work is an excellent repreſentation of a young heir, taking poſſeſſion of a miſer's effects. The paſſion of avarice, which hoards every thing, without diſtinction, what is and what is not valuable, is admirably deſcribed.—The *compoſition*, though not excellent, is not unpleaſing. The principal group, conſiſting of the young gentleman, the taylor, the appraiſer, the papers, and cheſt, is well ſhaped: but the eye is hurt with the diſagreeable regularity of three heads nearly in a line, and at equal diſtances.——The *light* is not ill diſpoſed. It falls on the principal figures: but the effect might have been improved. If the extreme parts of the maſs (the white apron on one ſide, and the memorandum-book on the other) had been in ſhade, the *repoſe* had been leſs injured. The detached parts of a group ſhould rarely catch a ſtrong body of light.—We have no ſtriking

ſtriking inſtances of *expreſſion* in this print. The principal figure is unmeaning. There are ſeveral modes of expreſſion, very ſuitable to the character, under which he is repreſented. He might have entertained himſelf with an old wig, or ſome other object of his father's attention—or he might have been grinning over a bag of money—or, as he is introduced diſmiſſing a girl he had debauched, he might have returned the old woman's threatening with a ſneer. The only figure, which diſplays the true *vis comica* of HOGARTH, is the appraiſer fingering the gold. We enter at once into his character.—The young woman might have furniſhed the artiſt with an opportunity of preſenting a graceful figure; which would have been more pleaſing. The figure he *has* introduced, is by no means an object of allurement.—— The *perſpective* is accurate; but affected. So many windows, and open doors, may ſhew the author's learning; but they break the back-ground, and injure the ſimplicity of it.

The ſecond print introduces our hero into all the diſſipation of modiſh life. We became firſt acquainted with him, when a boy of eighteen.

eighteen. He is now of age; has entirely thrown off the clowniſh ſchool-boy; and aſſumes the man of faſhion. Inſtead of the country taylor, who took meaſure of him for his father's mourning, he is now attended by French-barbers, French-taylors, poets, milliners, jockies, bullies, and the whole retinue of a fine gentleman.—The *expreſſion*, in this print, is wonderfully great. The dauntleſs front of the bully; the keen eye, and elaſticity of the fencing-maſter; and the ſimpering importance of the dancing-maſter are admirably expreſſed. The laſt is perhaps rather a little *outré*. The architect is a ſtrong copy from nature.——The *compoſition* ſeems to be entirely ſubſervient to the expreſſion. It appears, as if HOGARTH had ſketched, in his memorandum-book, all the characters which he has here introduced, but was at a loſs how to group them: and choſe rather to introduce them in detached figures, as he had ſketched them, than to loſe any part of the expreſſion by combining them.—The *light* is ill diſtributed. It is ſpread indiſcriminately over the print, and deſtroys the *whole*.—The *execution* is good. It is elaborate, but free.—The ſatire on operas, though it may be well directed, is forced and unnatural.

The third plate carries us ſtill deeper into the hiſtory. We meet our hero engaged in one of his evening amuſements. This print, on the whole, is no very extraordinary effort of genius.—The *deſign* is good; and may be a very exact deſcription of the humours of a brothel.—The *compoſition* too is not amiſs. But we have few of thoſe maſterly ſtrokes which diſtinguiſh the works of HOGARTH. The whole is plain hiſtory. The lady ſetting the world on fire, is the beſt thought: and there is ſome humour in furniſhing the room with a ſet of Cæſars; and not placing them in order.——The *light* is ill managed. By a few alterations, which are obvious, particularly by throwing the lady dreſſing, into the ſhade, the diſpoſition of it might have been tolerable. But ſtill we ſhould have had an abſurdity to anſwer, whence comes it? Here is light in abundance; but no viſible ſource. ——*Expreſſion* we have very little through the whole print. That of the principal figure is the beſt. The ladies have all the air of their profeſſion; but no variety of character. HOGARTH'S women are, in general, very

inferior

inferior to his men. For which reaſon I prefer the *rake*'s *progreſs* to the *harlot*'s. The female face indeed has ſeldom ſtrength of feature enough to admit the ſtrong markings of expreſſion.

Very diſagreeable accidents often befal gentlemen of pleaſure. An event of this kind is recorded in the fourth print; which is now before us. Our hero going, in full dreſs, to pay his compliments at court, on St. David's day, was accoſted in the rude manner which is here repreſented.——The *compoſition* is good. The form of the group, made up of the figures in action, the chair, and the lamp-lighter, is pleaſing. Only, here we have an opportunity of remarking, that a group is diſguſting when the extremities of it are heavy. A group in ſome reſpect ſhould reſemble a tree. The heavier part of the foliage (the *cup*, as the landſcape-painter calls it) is always near the middle: the outſide branches, which are relieved by the ſky, are light and airy. An inattention to this rule has given a heavineſs to the group before us. The two bailiffs, the woman, and the chairman, are all huddled

together

together in that part of the group which ſhould have been the lighteſt; while the middle part, where the hand holds the door, wants ſtrength and conſiſtence. It may be added too, that the four heads, in the form of a diamond, make an unpleaſing ſhape. All regular figures ſhould be ſtudiouſly avoided.——The *light* had been well diſtributed, if the bailiff holding the arreſt, and the chairman, had been a little lighter, and the woman darker. The glare of the white apron is diſagreeable.——We have, in this print, ſome beautiful inſtances of *expreſſion*. The ſurprize and terror of the poor gentleman is apparent in every limb, as far as is conſiſtent with the fear of diſcompoſing his dreſs. The inſolence of power in one of the bailiffs, and the unfeeling heart, which can jeſt with miſery, in the other, are ſtrongly marked. The ſelf-importance too of the Welſhman is not ill portrayed; who is chiefly introduced to ſettle the chronology of the ſtory.—In point of *grace*, we have nothing ſtriking. HOGARTH might have introduced a degree of it in the female figure; at leaſt he might have contrived to vary the heavy and unpleaſing form of her drapery.—The *perſpective* is good, and makes

an

an agreeable ſhape.—I cannot leave this print without remarking the *falling band-box*. Such repreſentations of quick motion are abſurd; and every moment, the abſurdity grows ſtronger. Objects of this kind are beyond the power of repreſentation.

Difficulties crowd ſo faſt upon our hero, that at the age of twenty-five, which he ſeems to have attained in the fifth plate, we find him driven to the neceſſity of marrying a woman, whom he deteſts, for her fortune. The *compoſition* here is good; and yet we have a diſagreeable regularity in the climax of the three figures, the maid, the bride, and the bridegroom.—The *light* is not ill diſtributed. The principal figure too is *graceful*; and there is ſtrong *expreſſion* in the ſeeming tranquillity of his features. He hides his contempt of the object before him as well as he can; and yet he cannot do it. She too has as much meaning as can appear through the deformity of her features. The clergyman's face we are well acquainted with, and alſo his wig; though we cannot pretend to ſay, where we have ſeen either. The clerk too is an admirable fellow.

——The

——The *perſpective* is well underſtood; but the church is too ſmall; and the wooden poſt, which ſeems to have no uſe, divides the picture diſagreeably.——The creed loſt, the commandments broken, and the poor's-box obſtructed by a cobweb, are all excellent ſtrokes of humour.

The fortune, which our adventurer has juſt received, enables him to make one puſh more at the gaming table. He is exhibited, in the ſixth print, venting curſes on his folly for having loſt his laſt ſtake.——This is on the whole, perhaps, the beſt print of the ſet. The horrid ſcene it deſcribes, was never more inimitably drawn. The *compoſition* is artful, and natural. If the ſhape of the whole be not quite pleaſing, the figures are ſo well grouped, and with ſo much eaſe and variety, that you cannot take offence.—In point of light, it is more culpable. There is not ſhade enough among the figures to balance the glare. If the neck-cloth, and weepers of the gentleman in mourning had been removed, and his hands thrown into ſhade, even that alone would have improved the effect.——The *expreſſion*, in almoſt

almoſt every figure, is admirable; and the whole is a ſtrong repreſentation of the human mind in a ſtorm. Three ſtages of that ſpecies of madneſs, which attends gaming, are here deſcribed. On the firſt ſhock, all is inward diſmay. The ruined gameſter is repreſented leaning againſt a wall, with his arms acroſs, loſt in an agony of horror. Perhaps never paſſion was deſcribed with ſo much force. In a ſhort time this horrible gloom burſts into a ſtorm of fury: he tears in pieces what comes next him; and kneeling down, imprecates curſes on himſelf. He next attacks others; every one in his turn whom he imagines to have been inſtrumental in his ruin.—The eager joy of the winning gameſters, the attention of the uſurer, the vehemence of the watchman, and the profound revery of the highwayman, are all admirably marked. There is great coolneſs too expreſſed in the little we ſee of the fat gentleman at the end of the table. The figure oppoſing the mad-man is bad: it has a drunken appearance; and drunkenneſs is not the vice of a gaming table.——The principal figure is *ill drawn*. The *perſpective* is formal; and the *execution* but indifferent: in heightening his expreſſion HOGARTH has loſt his ſpirit.

The ſeventh plate, which gives us the view of a jail, has very little in it. Many of the circumſtances, which may well be ſuppoſed to increaſe the miſery of a confined debtor, are well contrived; but the fruitful genius of HOGARTH, I ſhould think, might have treated the ſubject in a more copious manner. The epiſode of the fainting woman might have given way to many circumſtances more proper to the occaſion. This is the ſame woman, whom the rake diſcards in the firſt print; by whom he is reſcued in the fourth; who is preſent at his marriage; who follows him into jail; and, laſtly, to Bedlam. The thought is rather unnatural, and the moral certainly culpable.—The *compoſition* is bad. The group of the woman fainting, is a round heavy maſs: and the other group is ill ſhaped. The *light* could not be worſe managed; and, as the groups are contrived, could hardly be improved.—In the principal figure there is great *expreſſion*; and the fainting ſcene is well deſcribed.——A ſcheme to pay off the national debt, by a man who cannot pay his own; and the attempt of a ſilly rake, to retrieve his affairs

fairs by a work of genius, are admirable ſtrokes of humour.

The eighth plate brings the fortunes of the rake to a concluſion. It is a very expreſſive repreſentation of the moſt horrid ſcene which human nature can exhibit.——The *compoſition* is not bad. The group, in which the lunatic is chained, is well managed; and if it had been carried a little farther towards the middle of the picture, and the two women (who ſeem very oddly introduced) had been removed, both the compoſition, and the diſtribution of light had been good.——The *drawing* of the principal figure is a more accurate piece of anatomy than we commonly find in the works of this maſter. The *expreſſion* of the figure is rather unmeaning; and very inferior to the ſtrong characters of all the other lunatics. The fertile genius of the artiſt has introduced as many of the cauſes of madneſs, as he could well have collected; but there is ſome tautology. There are two religioniſts, and two aſtronomers. Yet there is variety in each; and ſtrong *expreſſion* in all the characters. The ſelf-ſatisfaction, and conviction, of him who

has diſcovered the longitude; the mock majeſty of the monarch; the moody melancholy of the lover; and the ſuperſtitious horror of the popiſh devotée, are all admirable.—The *perſpective* is ſimple and proper.

I ſhould add, that theſe remarks are made upon the firſt edition of this work. When the plates were much worn, they were altered in many parts. They have gained by the alterations, in point of *deſign*; but have loſt in point of *expreſſion*.

CHAP. V.

CAUTIONS IN COLLECTING PRINTS.

THE collector of prints may be firſt cautioned againſt indulging a deſire of becoming poſſeſſed of *all* the works of any maſter. There are no maſters whoſe works in the *groſs* deſerve notice. No man is equal to himſelf in all his compoſitions. I have known a collector of REMBRANDT ready to give any price for two or three prints which he wanted to complete his collection; though it had been to REMBRANDT'S credit, if thoſe prints had been ſuppreſſed. There is no doubt, but if one third of the works of this maſter ſhould be tried by the rules of juſt criticiſm, they would

appear of little value. The great prince *Eugene*, it is ſaid, was a collector of this kind; and piqued himſelf upon having in his poſſeſſion, *all the works of all the maſters*. His collection was bulky, and coſt fourſcore thouſand pounds; but when ſifted, could not, at that time of day, be worth ſo many hundreds.

The collector of prints may ſecondly be cautioned againſt a ſuperſtitious veneration for names. A true judge leaves the *maſter* out of the queſtion, and examines only the *work*. But, with a little genius, nothing ſways like a name. It carries a wonderful force; covers glaring faults, and creates imaginary beauties. That ſpecies of criticiſm is certainly juſt, which examines the different manners of different maſters, with a view to diſcover in how many ways a good effect may be produced, and which produces the beſt. But to be curious in finding out a maſter, in order *there* to reſt the judgment, is a kind of criticiſm very paltry, and illiberal. It is judging of the work by the maſter, inſtead of judging of the maſter by the work. Hence it is, that ſuch vile prints as

the *Woman in the cauldron*, and *Mount Parnaſſus*, obtain credit among connoiſſeurs. If you aſk wherein their beauty conſiſts? you are informed, they are engraved by MARK ANTONIO: and if that do not ſatisfy you, you are farther aſſured, they are after RAPHAEL. This abſurd taſte raiſed an honeſt indignation in that ingenious artiſt PICART: who having ſhewn the world, by his excellent imitations, how ridiculous it is to pay a blind veneration to *names;* tells us, that he had compared ſome of the engravings of the ancient maſters with the original pictures; and found them very bad copies. He ſpeaks of the ſtiffneſs, which in general runs through them——of the hair of children, which reſembles pot-hooks—and of the ignorance of thoſe engravers in anatomy, drawing, and the diſtribution of light.

Nearly allied to this folly, is that of making the public taſte our ſtandard. It is a moſt uncertain criterion. Faſhion prevails in every thing. While it is confined to dreſs, or the idle ceremonies of a viſit, the affair is trivial: but when faſhion becomes a dictator in arts,

the matter is more ſerious. Yet ſo it is; we ſeldom permit ourſelves to judge of beauty by the rules of art: but follow the catch-word of faſhion; and applaud, and cenſure from the voice of others. Hence it happens, that ſometimes the works of one maſter, and ſometimes of another, have the prevailing run. REMBRANDT has long been the faſhionable maſter. Little diſtinction is made: if the prints are REMBRANDT's, they muſt be good. In two or three years, perhaps, the date of REMBRANDT may be over: you may buy his works at eaſy rates; and the public will have acquired ſome other favourite. For the truth of theſe obſervations, I might appeal to the dealers in old prints; all of whom know the uncertain value of the commodity they vend. Hence it is, that ſuch noble productions, as the works of P. TESTA, are in ſuch little eſteem, that the whole collection of this maſter, though it conſiſts of near twenty capital prints, beſide many ſmall ones, may be bought for leſs than is ſometimes given for a ſingle print of REMBRANDT. The true connoiſſeur leaves the voice of faſhion entirely out of the queſtion: he has a better ſtandard of beauty—the merit

of

of each maſter, which he will find frequently at variance with common opinion.

A fourth caution, which may be of uſe in collecting prints, is, not to rate their value by their *ſcarceneſs*. Scarceneſs will make a *valuable* print *more* valuable: but to make ſcarceneſs the ſtandard of a print's value, is to miſtake an accident for merit. This folly is founded in vanity; and ariſes from a deſire of poſſeſſing what nobody elſe can poſſeſs. The want of *real* merit is made up by *imaginary;* and the object is intended to be *kept*, not *looked at*. Yet, abſurd as this falſe taſte is, nothing is more common; and a trifling genius may be found, who will give ten guineas for HOLLAR'S ſhells, which, valued according to their merit (and much merit they certainly have), are not worth more than twice as many ſhillings.—Inſtances in abundance might be collected of the prevalence of this folly. LE CLERC, in his print of *Alexander's triumph*, had given a profile of that prince. The print was ſhewn to the duke of Orleans; who was pleaſed with it on the whole, but juſtly enough objected to the

the ſide-face. The obſequious artiſt eraſed it, and engraved a full one. A few impreſſions had been taken from the plate in its firſt ſtate; which ſell among the curious for ten times the price of the impreſſions taken after the face was altered.——CALLOT, once pleaſed with a little plate of his own etching, made a hole in it; through which he drew a ribbon, and wore it at his button. The impreſſions after the hole was made, are very ſcarce, and amazingly valuable.—In a print of the holy family, from VANDYKE, St. John was repreſented laying his hand upon the virgin's ſhoulder. Before the print was publiſhed, the artiſt ſhewed it among his critical friends, ſome of whom thought the action of St. John too familiar. The painter was convinced, and removed the hand. But he was miſtaken, when he thought he added value to his print by the alteration. The few impreſſions, which got abroad, with the hand upon the ſhoulder, would buy up all the reſt, three times over, in any auction in London.—Many of REMBRANDT's prints receive infinite value from little accidental alterations of this kind. A few impreſſions were taken from one plate, before a dog

a dog was introduced; from another, before a white-horſe tail was turned into a black one; from a third, before a ſign-poſt was inſerted at an ale-houſe door: and all the ſcarce prints from theſe plates, though altered for the better, are the prints of value: the reſt are common and cheap.—I ſhall conclude theſe inſtances with a ſtory of a late celebrated collector of pictures. He was ſhewing his collection with great ſatisfaction; and after expatiating on many noble works by GUIDO, MARRATTI, and other maſters, he turned ſuddenly to the gentleman, whom he attended, and, "Now, Sir, ſaid he, I'll ſhew you a real curioſity: there is a WOVERMAN, without a horſe in it."—The circumſtance, it is true, was uncommon; but was unluckily that very circumſtance, which made the picture of little value.

Let the collector of prints be cautioned, fifthly, to beware of buying copies for originals. Moſt of the works of the capital maſters have been copied; and many of them ſo well, that if a perſon be not verſed in prints, he may eaſily be deceived. Were the copies really as good

good as the originals, the name would ſignify nothing: but, like tranſlations, they neceſſarily fall ſhort of the ſpirit of the original: and contract a ſtiffneſs from the fear of erring. When ſeen apart, they look well; but when compared with the originals, the difference eaſily appears. Thus CALLOT's *beggars* have been ſo well copied, that the difference between the originals and the copies would not immediately ſtrike you; but when you compare them, it is obvious. There is a plain want of freedom; the characters are leſs ſtrongly marked; and the extremities are leſs accurately touched. ——It is a difficult matter to give rules to aſſiſt in diſtinguiſhing the copy from the original. In moſt caſes the engraver's name, or his mark (which ſhould be well known), will be a ſufficient direction. Theſe the copyiſt is ſeldom hardy enough to forge. But in anonymous prints it is matter of more difficulty. All that can be done, is to attend carefully to the *freedom* of the *manner*, in the *extremities* eſpecially, in which the copyiſt is more liable to fail. When you are pretty well acquainted with the *manner* of a maſter, you cannot well be deceived. When you are not, your beſt way is to be directed by thoſe who are.

The

The laſt caution I ſhall give the collector of prints, is, to take care he purchaſe not bad impreſſions.—There are three things which make an impreſſion bad.—The firſt is, its being *ill taken off*. Some prints ſeem to have received the force of the roller at intervals. The impreſſion is double; and gives that glimmering appearance, which illudes the eye. —A ſecond thing, which makes an impreſſion bad, is *a worn plate*. There is great difference between the firſt and the laſt impreſſion of the ſame plate. The *effect* is wholly loſt in a faint impreſſion; and you have nothing left but a vapid deſign without ſpirit, and without force. In mezzotinto eſpecially a ſtrong impreſſion is deſirable. For the ſpirit of a mezzotinto quickly evaporates; without which it is the moſt inſipid of all prints. In engraving and etching there will be always here and there a dark touch, which long preſerves an appearance of ſpirit: but mezzotinto is a flat ſurface; and when it begins to wear, it wears *all over*. Very many of the works of all the great maſters, which are commonly hawked about at auctions, or ſold in ſhops, are in this wretched

ſtate.

ſtate. It is difficult to meet with a good impreſſion. The SALVATORS, REMBRANDTS, and WATERLOS, which we meet with now, except here and there, in ſome choice collection, are ſeldom better than mere reverſes. You ſee the form of the print; but the elegant, and maſterly touches are gone; backgrounds and foregrounds are jumbled together by the confuſion of all diſtance; and you have rather the ſhadow of a print left, than the print itſelf. —The laſt thing which makes a bad impreſſion, is *retouching a worn plate.* Sometimes this is performed by the maſter himſelf; and then the ſpirit of the impreſſion may be ſtill preſerved. But moſt commonly the retouching part is done by ſome bungler, into whoſe hands the plate has fallen; and then it is very bad. In a *worn* plate, at leaſt what you have is good: you have the remains of ſomething excellent; and if you are verſed in the works of the maſter, your imagination may be agreeably exerciſed in making out what is loſt. But when the plate has gone through the hands of a bungler, who has worked it over with his harſh ſcratches, the idea of the maſter is loſt; and you have nothing left, but ſtrong, unmeaning lines on a faint ground; which is a moſt diſagreeable contraſt. Such prints,

prints, and many ſuch there are, though offered us under the name of REMBRANDT, or WATERLO, are of little value. Thoſe maſters would not have owned ſuch works.——Yet, as we are often obliged to take up with ſuch impreſſions, as we can get; it is better to chuſe a *faint* impreſſion, than a *retouched* one.

THE END.

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